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BY

FRANCIS J. HALL, D.D.

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THE TRINITY

BY THE

REV. FRANCIS J. HALL, D.D.

PROFESSOR OF DOGMATIC THEOLOGY IN THE GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK CITY

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TO THE

BLESSED MEMORY

OF

SAINT AUGUSTINE

OF HIPPO

WHOSE "DE TRINITATE" CAN NEVER

CEASE TO BE HELPFUL TO

THEOLOGICAL

STUDENTS

PREFACE

No one can seriously and intelligently investigate the contents and implications of the doctrine of the Trinity without becoming convinced that it constitutes the most fundamental and significant of Christian doctrines. It is presupposed in, and determines the fundamental meaning of, all Christian doctrine and practice; and upon its truth the validity of the Christian system, both in its theoretical and in its practical aspects, absolutely depends. To suppose that one can understand Christianity without carefully reckoning with the doctrine in question is obviously to adopt an unintelligent position.

This being so, the neglect into which systematic treatment of trinitarian doctrine has fallen during the past century appears most lamentable. The reasons for this neglect are not far to seek, and need not be here discussed. It is clear, however, that so long as this neglect continues, the tendency to regard Christian doctrines as so many independent and abstract propositions requiring separate vindication will hamper Christian apologists, belief in the supernatural will be robbed of a primary basis, and both the warrant for and the significance of Christian ideals and practices will suffer obscuration. The one-sided emphasis upon purely humanitarian ideas and ideals

which characterizes much contemporary thought and endeavour is an inevitable result of relegating trinitarian conceptions to the limbo of non-significant speculation, having no determinative bearing on practical religion and duty.

Happily, signs have appeared in recent years of more vital interest in the doctrine of the Trinity. R. L. Ottley's *The Doctrine of the Incarnation*, J. R. Illingworth's *Personality Human and Divine*, and the same writer's *The Doctrine of the Trinity Apologetically Considered*, afford evidences of this. Perhaps the chief cause of this revived interest is the importance which agnostic attacks and recent psychological investigations have given in contemporary thought to the problem of personality. It is coming to be realized more widely that not only does the validity and vital significance of Christianity and its distinctive ideals depend upon trinitarian doctrine, but the trinitarian hypothesis is needed to-day for vindicating and vitalizing belief in a personal God.

The fact remains that, in Anglican literature of recent generations, no comprehensive and systematic treatise on the doctrine of the Trinity exists. This fact imparts a pioneer quality to the writer's undertaking, and has made his task peculiarly difficult. His purpose requires a comprehensive and systematic treatment of the subject, and faithful adherence to catholic doctrine and to the ecclesiastical terms in which it has been embodied. Yet it is also necessary that he should make the doctrine intelligible to a

generation to which traditional terms, and the forms of thought which explain them, have become remote and to some extent misleading. To do all this in one brief volume requires severe condensation; and although the writer has endeavoured to write as clearly as possible, he is conscious of dependence upon the reader's charity and patience.

The reader will, however, misconceive the writer's aim, and perhaps unjustly criticize his method, if he fails to note that this is a treatise of dogmatic rather than apologetical theology. The presence in it of apologetical material is due to the necessity above referred to of reaching the intelligence of an age which has become habituated to forms of thought and expression which make the traditional terms of trinitarian theology appear remote and difficult. But the purpose of this book is systematic and expository, although the conditions under which it is written have required and justify the incorporation of apologetical matter.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

PART I. *Importance of the Subject*

PAGE

§ 1. Determines all Christian doctrines and ideals of life 1
§ 2. Fundamental in scientific theology 3
§ 3. *Objections:* (*a*) Abstract and technical nature of the trinitarian dogma 5
§ 4. (*b*) Religion not a matter of intellect 8
§ 5. (*c*) God unknowable 9
§ 6. (*d*) Ritschlianism and pragmatism 11
§ 7. (*e*) Dogma too precise 13

PART II. *Catholic Doctrine Defined*

§ 8. Five particulars 15
§ 9. Ecclesiastical statements 18
§ 10. Errors 22
§ 11. Literature 27

CHAPTER II

REVELATION OF THE DOCTRINE

PART I. *In Nature and Reason*

§ 1. Not directly revealed by the visible order . . 30
§ 2. Ethnic trinities 31

PAGE

§ 3. Once revealed, the doctrine harmonizes with reason 35

PART II. *Supernatural Revelation*

§ 4. Rule of faith 36
§ 5. Scripture records a progressive revelation . . . 37
§ 6. Primitive knowledge of God 38
§ 7. *Stages:* (*a*) Divine unity first emphasized . . . 39
§ 8. (*b*) With hints of internal distinction of Persons . 40
§ 9. Effect on Jewish speculation 44
§ 10. (*c*) Revelation of the second Person 47
§ 11. (*d*) Revelation of the third Person 47
§ 12. (*e*) The Apostles guided to combine these particulars 48

CHAPTER III

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEFINITIONS

PART I. *Ante-Nicene Period*

§ 1. Transition from experience to speculation and definition 50
§ 2. Second-century heresies 53
§ 3. Logos speculation 58
§ 4. The Monarchia. Psilanthropism 63
§ 5. Patripassianism and Sabellianism 64
§ 6. Tertullian. *Substantia* and *Persona* 65
§ 7. Development of the terms οὐσία and ὑπόστασις . 67
§ 8. Origen and the schools of Alexandria and Antioch 70
§ 9. Paul of Samosata and the ὁμοούσιος 74

PART II. *Nicene Period*

§ 10. Origen and logic of Arianism 76
§ 11. Nicene decision and subsequent conflict . . . 81
§ 12. Circumcession and subordination 86

PAGE

§ 13. The Holy Spirit. Macedonian controversy . . 88
§ 14. The *filioque* 92
§ 15. Nestorian, monophysite, and monothelite controversies, and the distinction between ὑπόστασις and φύσις 97
§ 16. Patristic terms crystallized 99

CHAPTER IV

BIBLICAL INDUCTION

PART I. *Introduction*

§ 1. Method and presupposition 102
§ 2. Initial objection — that one God cannot exist in plurality of persons 103
§ 3. The New Testament teaches plurality in God . 106

PART II. *Old Testament Implications*

§ 4. (*a*) The plural name, Elohim 107
§ 5. (*b*) Plural pronouns 109
§ 6. (*c*) Hints of threefoldness in God 113
§ 7. (*d*) Messianic prophecies 115
§ 8. (*e*) Old Testament references to the Spirit . . 120

PART III. *New Testament Teaching*

§ 9. What is implicit in the Old is explicit in the New Testament 121
§ 10. (*a*) Divine operations and attributes ascribed to Christ 122
§ 11. (*b*) And divine titles 124
§ 12. (*c*) Christ's claims and the dilemma involved . 125
§ 13. (*d*) Christ's teaching as to the Holy Spirit . . 130
§ 14. (*e*) Confirmed by other New Testament teaching 132
§ 15. (*f*) The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are revealed as mutually coinherent 134

PAGE

§ 16. (*g*) And as related in eternal procession from the Father 137
§ 17. Conclusion 140

CHAPTER V

DIFFICULTIES

PART I. *Biblical*

§ 1. Difficulties partly biblical and partly rational . . 142
§ 2. Christ's human limitations 143
§ 3. Subordination texts 147
§ 4. The Son and the Spirit sent by, and obedient to, the Father 148
§ 5. Miscellaneous texts 150
§ 6. Summing up 155

PART II. *Rational*

§ 7. Due to attempts to solve insoluble problems . . 156
§ 8. (*a*) The doctrine said to be unintelligible, unrelated to experience 160
§ 9. (*b*) And self-contradictory 163
§ 10. Alleged requirement of plural being for plural personality 166
§ 11. (*c*) Arian syllogism 169
§ 12. (*d*) A derived Person not self-existent 170
§ 13. (*e*) How can a man be very God? 171

CHAPTER VI

PERSONALITY AND RELATED TERMS

PART I. *In Traditional Theology*

§ 1. The meaning of theological terms determined by their theological use 175

PAGE

§ 2. Various uses of "person" 176
§ 3. Its use by Tertullian and St. Augustine . . . 176
§ 4. Eastern usage 178
§ 5. Scholastic usage 181
§ 6. Person in theology means self 182
§ 7. The term "nature" 186

PART II. *In Modern Thought*

§ 8. Changes of terminology cause difficulty . . . 187
§ 9. This calls for explanation of catholic terms, not their abandonment 191
§ 10. Contributions of modern psychology 193
§ 11. Divine personality alone complete 197

PART III. *Terms Defined*

§ 12. Those related to personality. 202
§ 13. Other terms 208

CHAPTER VII

THE DIVINE PERSONS

PART I. *Reason and Analogy*

§ 1. Résumé and introduction 211
§ 2. Threefold personality of God not demonstrable but rationally credible 212

PART II. *Divine Processions and Relations*

§ 3. Doctrine of processions 217
§ 4. Notions, relations, and properties 221
§ 5. Generation of the Son 223
§ 6. Its uniqueness 228
§ 7. Procession of the Spirit 230

Part III. *Divine Monarchy*

PAGE

§ 8. Doctrine of subordination 237
§ 9. Its history and value 242
§ 10. Doctrine of circumcession 243
§ 11. Its implications and value 248

CHAPTER VIII

THE ECONOMIC TRINITY

Part I. *In General*

§ 1. Divine economies 250
§ 2. The term "economy" 252
§ 3. Appropriations 254
§ 4. Divine missions 258

Part II. *The Persons Described*

§ 5. The Father 263
§ 6. The Son 266
§ 7. The Holy Spirit 271

Part III. *Analogies and Illustrations*

§ 8. Revelation by analogy 276
§ 9. Extra-scriptural illustrations 279
§ 10. Use and abuse of illustrations 284

CHAPTER IX

PRACTICAL VALUE

Part I. *Practical Aim of Revelation*

§ 1. Doctrine necessarily practical, if intelligible . . 289
§ 2. Divine revelation necessarily practical . . . 291
§ 3. Similarly its dogmatic definition 293

PAGE

§ 4. The interests of vital religion involved . . . 296
§ 5. The doctrine of the Trinity, being central, especially valuable 298

PART II. *For Other Christian Beliefs*

§ 6. Belief in God 299
§ 7. Belief in Christ 303
§ 8. Belief in the Atonement 305

PART III. *For Guidance of Life*

§ 9. Determining duty and ideals 307
§ 10. In relation to sin 310
§ 11. The spiritual life 312

THE TRINITY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. *Importance of the Subject*

§ 1. The subject of which we treat in this volume is the doctrine of the Trinity — the doctrine that *we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.* This doctrine is simple, in so far as its determinative affirmations — that each of three distinct Persons is truly God, and yet that there is but one God — can be severally understood and correctly received by humble understandings. But it is the profoundest of all doctrines, because it combines in one view propositions which concern the foundations of truth, and of which our knowledge is too incipient to afford adequate data for explaining their harmony. Yet we have sufficient reasons for believing that their appearance of mutual opposition is due to the limita-

tions of our understanding — not to any real contradiction between them.[1]

Those who do not sufficiently examine into the relation of this doctrine to other truths, and into its practical bearings and consequences, are apt to regard it as wholly abstract and barren of interest. But an adequate consideration of its theoretical and practical connections and implications justifies the conviction that the doctrine of the Trinity is the interpretative principle of all Christian doctrine, the ultimate basis of Christian ideals and hopes, and the most vital and inspiring of all the truths which human minds can contemplate.[2] It is either an agnostic attitude towards divine self-manifestation or a failure to go beneath the technical surface of theological propositions that accounts for the wide-spread lack of interest in this fundamental doctrine, and for the impoverished spiritual vision which this lack of interest explains.[3]

The doctrine of the Trinity must occupy the central place in any sound or adequate conception of spiritual realities. It constitutes the postulate of the doctrines of the Incarnation,[4] of the Atonement,[5] of the Church,

[1] We discuss the intelligibility and self-consistency of the doctrine of the Trinity in ch. v. §§ 7–10, below.

[2] The practical bearing and value of the doctrine is considered in ch. ix, below.

[3] Cf. ch. ix. § 11, below, for further discussion of the existing indifference to spiritual truths and interests.

[4] Cf. ch. ix. § 7, below.

[5] *Ibid.*, § 8.

of justification and salvation, and of the coming kingdom of God. If it were shown to be false, these doctrines would have to be modified beyond recognition, and Christianity would become something quite other than it actually is. Its faith would become no one can imagine what; its institutions would be robbed of their divine sanction and meaning; its worship would suffer condemnation as hopelessly polytheistic; its ideals and hopes would be stultified; and the whole face of the spiritual world would be altered. All this being so, the contention that no one can claim to understand Christianity and its practical consequences who disparages, or neglects to reckon with, the doctrine of the Trinity is an obvious truism.

§ 2. That a doctrine which is so fundamental and so determinative of religious belief and life ought to be given a primary place in theological science is very evident. Its affirmations constitute the fundamental premises of true thinking concerning the subject matters of theology; and the possibility of successfully developing theological science depends upon an adequate study of the content and implications of the doctrine of the Trinity. Those who have undertaken such study learn that the scientific claim of theology, and even the claim to possess any true knowledge of God and of the meaning of the universe,[1] depend upon the fact that this doctrine constitutes the first of all truths, the justification of all Christian beliefs, and the basis of any sound philosophy of being

[1] *Ibid.*, § 6.

and life.[1] To disparage its adequate study and scientific exposition is in effect to surrender the task of science in general; which is to co-ordinate human knowledge, and to exhibit its contents in their mutual connections, as constituting a coherent unity of reality and truth. The only possible justification for indifference concerning this subject among those who profess to believe in God, and who seek to become intelligent thinkers, is the agnostic doctrine that God is wholly unknowable; and that His self-manifestation, as recorded in the Scriptures, possesses no validity for human intelligence.[2] That this is so cannot rationally be denied by those who take pains to consider what has been said. To suppose that a system of education can be called adequate or "liberal" which renounces, as unimportant, the task of assimilating the knowledge which is needed for unifying all other knowledge is to suppose something contrary to sound reason.[3] The self-manifestation of God is an unveiling of the deepest meaning of the universe; and it makes known to us an ever blessed Trinity, whose tri-personal relations to created things constitute the fundamental data of a final philosophy of

[1] God is the Creator and immanent Governor of the universe, so that His nature and purposes afford the clue to the meaning of its phenomena. If our doctrine is true, however, a knowledge of it is essential for such understanding of the nature and purposes of God as we are capable of obtaining.

[2] On "Theological Agnosticism," see *Being and Attributes of God*, ch. ii.

[3] Cf. *Introd. to Dogmatic Theol.*, ch. I. §§ 3, 4, 20, 27–33.

the evolving universe. One who does not believe in the truth of Christian doctrine will, of course, deny that such a view is correct; but for a Christian believer to do so, and to disparage the vital importance for adequate knowledge of a careful study of the doctrine of the Trinity, is either to betray a thoughtless mind or to display unintelligence.

§ 3. In saying this certain well-known objections to the technicalities of the doctrine in question are not forgotten.

(*a*) It is urged, for instance, that the dogmatic form of ecclesiastical teaching on the subject, and the abstract technicalities of theological exposition, give a different impression to the mind from that produced by the teaching of Christ and His apostles upon which they are claimed to be based.[1] That teaching was not technical, and had religious rather than scientific ends in view. The importance of getting back to the simple and practical lines of New Testament teaching is insisted upon, often with a sincere piety that demands our respect, although its logic is somewhat fallacious.

That the truths with which the doctrine of the Trinity is concerned are in their several particulars capable of simple expression, and when rightly received

[1] Many have urged this: *e.g.* Edwin Hatch, in the commencement of his Hibbert Lectures, *Influence of Greek Ideas*. W. Sanday, in Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *s. v.* "Jesus Christ," p. 649, shows that the process of defining began in New Testament days, and that subsequent theology was faithful to the original data. Cf. *Authority, Eccles. and Biblical*, ch. iv. § 3, where other references are given.

are in their simplest forms possessed of their full religious value, cannot be denied.[1] But, as has already been noted, these truths have aspects, and raise problems, which are exceedingly profound and baffling to those who endeavour to assimilate them intelligently; and an intelligent faith is necessary for the vitality of religion among the intelligent. Such truths are certain to be reflected upon, and reflection causes troublesome questions to emerge. Difficulties arise, which in some quarters bring confusion of mind and the adoption of errors which, if they prevail, must subvert the faith of the Gospel and undermine true religion. Accurate definition becomes indispensable if truth is to be preserved for future generations, and upon such preservation the continuance of the religion of Christ and His apostles depends. The age in which religion can live without definitions, without a technical theology for the explication and preservation of its fundamental and justifying postulates, must forever come to an end so soon as it becomes the subject-matter of intelligent scrutiny, of rationalistic attack, and of heretical perversion.

The development of thought can no more be reversed in religion than in other departments of living interest; and the consequence of such development is that the continued religious vitality and value of New Testament teaching depend upon its being

[1] That they are readily apprehended in both matter and evidence, see Dan. Waterland, *Importance of the Doc. of Trin.* (*Works*, ed. by Van Mildert), ch. i. pp. 405–416.

exhibited in the terms of later thought. A truth which does not gain definitive and more or less technical expression with the progress of human thinking is necessarily one that has ceased to engage intelligent interest in any form. As has been stated, the doctrine of the Trinity, if true, has important significance in general human knowledge. It affords fundamental data for philosophy, and inevitably becomes the subject-matter of philosophical treatment and apologetical discussion. The consequence is that it has to be carefully defined, and in terms of higher thought. We may be tempted at times to regret our loss of the trustful simplicity of childhood; but if we are to grapple with our appointed vocations in life, childish simplicity must develop into mature reflection. The implicit beliefs of early ages must become the explicit concepts of advancing intelligence, and must be defined in its terms, or else cease to have even the practical and non-scientific value for life that they originally possessed. To object to technical definitions of religious truths is equivalent to maintaining that religion is most vital when least intelligent. And this sufficiently answers every objection based upon grounds of sentimental reverence. Religious reverence depends for its continuance upon intelligent apprehension of the truths which call it forth; and such apprehension depends in each age upon an exercise of the intelligence of that age upon the truths of religion.[1]

[1] See H. P. Liddon, *Univ. Sermons*, 2d Series, II. pp. 105–109.

§ 4. (*b*) Another objection, which is also made in the supposed interests of religion, is based upon the assertion that the essence of religion is not intellectual but emotional. Religion, it said, consists in sense of dependence rather than in correctness of mental conceptions concerning God. The answer is that we cannot divorce the emotions and the intelligence in religion. Religion is not to be defined by any phrase which exalts one part of our nature at the expense of another. It is a bond connecting men with God, and as such enlists the full and harmonious activity of every human faculty. The emotions, it should be added, are never experienced or cultivated as non-intelligent experience and action, but under the conditions of an inseparable union of feeling, intellect, and will in all spiritual functioning. Man does not become a fragment of himself in religion; but, whether he realizes the fact or not, feels in religion according as he thinks and wills. To suppose otherwise is to be guided by bad psychology. The sense of dependence must have an object, and the more true and sound a man's conception of that object is, other conditions being rightly controlled, the more exalted and truly religious will be his sense of dependence.

So it is with the will. True religion is as dependent upon a rightly ordered life as upon right feeling, and both are dependent upon correct knowledge of the object of religious emotion. A righteous life depends upon a true ideal of life, and this in turn depends

Psychology as a science is young, but as an art it is old.

upon correct knowledge of the truths by which life ought to be determined.[1] Supreme among these truths is the manifestation of the tri-une God and of our relations to the Three-in-One. Such considerations bring us back to our principal contention, that knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity is a vital part of our religious equipment; and a knowledge which shuns determinate conceptions, and refuses to be expressed in the terms of man's highest intelligence, is self-condemned and is doomed to extinction as invalid.

§ 5. (*c*) We come to the agnostic class of objections, objections which are based upon forms of scepticism rather than upon the supposed interests of religion.

Philosophical agnosticism denies the capacity of the human mind to know God or to describe His nature and attributes. If such a denial is justifiable, we must, of course, regard the doctrine of the Trinity — and any theistic doctrine whatever — as wholly unwarranted and useless, as a mere manipulation of subjective imaginings, having no value for religion or for any rational purpose.

The argument of agnosticism cannot here be discussed,[2] but a few brief remarks may be ventured.

[1] See H. P. Liddon, *Some Elements of Religion*, Lec. i. Cf. the author's *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. iv. §§ 4, 5, where other references are given.

[2] It has been discussed in *The Being and Attributes of God*, ch. ii, and in *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. v. Pt. II., where abundant references are given.

In the first place, the issue raised by agnosticism is not whether we can acquire an exhaustive or adequate knowledge of God. No intelligent Christian claims to have more than a very partial knowledge of Him. Agnostics deny that we can have any knowledge whatever of God.[1] If they are wrong, and we really can and do obtain some knowledge of the Supreme Being, however imperfect, such knowledge must, as we have seen, have a value for both religion and science that demands our earnest consideration and an accurate definition of it. In the next place, agnosticism cannot maintain itself unless it is ready to maintain all that is involved in its logic. The arguments by which our mental incapacity is established in things divine, if they are valid, prove our incapacity to know any objective reality. To illustrate this by one particular, if the relativity of all human knowledge nullifies the validity of what is thought to be real knowledge of God, it also nullifies the alleged knowledge which is exhibited in natural science. It does more, it nullifies the testimony of consciousness, and therefore robs itself of the only possible data by which any position, including the agnostic, can be established. In short, to be consistent agnosticism must be thorough; and when it is thorough, it destroys its own foundations.

[1] If valid, agnosticism is fatal to every form of theistic doctrine, but the trinitarian point of view facilitates belief for those who are disturbed by agnostic arguments. Cf. Illingworth, *Doc. of the Trinity*, pp. 131–144; and below, ch. v. §§ 8–10.

To proceed, the destructive effect of agnosticism, if it is to be accepted, cannot be confined in religion to the banishment of dogmas and theological definitions. If we have no real knowledge of God there is no basis for religion, and religion must go. A sense of dependence which is entirely without knowledge of its object cannot survive; and a religious system and life that cannot be justified by the truth of its implicates, that is, by some knowledge of the God in relation to whom its institutions and precepts are determined, is doomed. The agnostic objection, therefore, cannot be consistently urged by those who believe in religion.

§ 6. (*d*) The agnostic objection assumes plausible and somewhat disguised forms in Ritschlianism and pragmatism. Ritschlianism [1] describes the mind as possessed of two mutually independent consciousnesses — the scientific and the religious. The propositions of the scientific consciousness, if true, have to do with objective realities and have scientific validity; but those of the religious consciousness may not be said to have such validity, for they are value-judgments, estimates of worth. Thus the proposition that Christ is God should be taken to mean simply that His personality has a divine value for our religious consciousness. In short, we may not claim to know

[1] Ritschlianism is fully explained in the several monographs on that system by Orr, Edghill, J. K. Mozley, and Garvie. We are not here concerned with a precise and critical definition of Albert Ritschl's position, but with the working theory which is usually signified by the name Ritschlianism.

that Christ is really God, but only that He has divine worth for ourselves. Such a position is really agnosticism in a new dress, and is open to all the futilities of that system. It is also based on bad psychology. Our minds are not broken up into separate and mutually unrelated compartments or departments of functioning. We have but one mind and reason, and it is that reason which we exercise in both science and religion.[1] If its exercise seems to bring knowledge in the religious sphere, the only way in which we can disprove the reality of such knowledge is by showing either that the laws of reason have been violated or that the data employed are erroneously accepted and understood.

Pragmatism,[2] like Ritschlianism, emphasizes values; but widens the sphere of this emphasis. It denies the existence of "objective" truth, and declares that the truth of any proposition is simply its working value. It is true when, and because, it works well — is useful for the practical purposes of the mind. This means that what I will to believe is for me the truth; and that my truth cannot be truth for others, except so far as it serves their purposes. No pragmatist would press such logic to the end, but it is the logic of his theory. It is agnostic, in that it leaves no place

[1] Cf. Illingworth, *Trinity*, pp. 167–177; who also quotes some suggestive remarks, pp. 256–259, from Ormund, *Foundations of Knowledge*, iii. 3.

[2] Its most brilliant exponent and defender has been the late Prof. Wm. James. See his *Pragmatism*, 1907; and its sequel, *The Meaning of Truth*, 1909.

for the claim to know realities as they are; and unless such knowledge is possible, we must abandon not only every Christian doctrine, except as a theory with which to please ourselves, but also religion itself as having any intellectual validity or binding force upon the conscience. We are sufficiently in accord with the logic which determines human life the world over to regard the truth of a proposition as being its agreement with the realities with which it is concerned; and it is because the doctrine of the Trinity is in this sense true, that the importance of its being made a subject-matter of systematic study and explication is here maintained.

§ 7. (*e*) There are many who are prepared to confess that we have some sort of knowledge of God, and yet are unready to admit that our knowledge is sufficient to warrant such precise definitions as are to be found in the catholic doctrine of the Trinity. Such persons appear to confuse precise with adequate knowledge, as if an inadequate knowledge meant a vague knowledge — one incapable of clear definition. If one's knowledge of the United States were confined entirely to what could be represented by a bare outline of its boundaries, mountains, lakes, and rivers, it would be very inadequate, for it would leave out every indication of its population, commerce, civilization, government, and international relations, as well as of many other national characteristics. Yet the outline might be very exact and accurate, and convey a knowledge of the most precise, trustworthy,

and useful kind — not less so because given in a figure.

The doctrine of the Trinity contains a very few brief statements concerning God — statements which can in no sense be regarded as defining more than finite beginnings of knowledge of the divine nature. They define what the self-manifestation of God to His creatures has enabled the Church to apprehend — no more. They do not enable us to fathom the divine nature, nor do they satisfy, or pretend to satisfy, a craving for adequate knowledge. But they presuppose that the self-manifestation of God, partial though it be, is sufficiently determinate to be accurately summarized in technical propositions — propositions which have been developed and tested by many controversies and conflicts with error.[1] Determinate ideals of life depend for justification and vitality upon determinate knowledge of the truths which such ideals presuppose. The truths contained in the doctrine of the Trinity are of this kind. They determine our relations to God, and therefore our practical ideals of life. To suppose that such knowledge of these truths as is afforded to mankind has been left by God in a chaotic, vague, and undefinable state, is to suppose that He is indifferent to the pos-

[1] Illingworth gives some suggestive remarks, *Trinity*, p. 129, in which he says, "Athanasius and Augustine did not claim a greater knowledge than that of St. Paul and St. John, because they formulated common knowledge in more technical terms. But each generation needed training to live by the same knowledge, and dogma was the condition of the sameness."

session by us of the conditions of advance towards our supernatural destiny.

II. *Catholic Doctrine Defined*

§ 8. Before proceeding further it is desirable to define the substantial contents of the doctrine of the Trinity — the doctrine, that is, which brings together the opposite truths of divine unity in being and of the true Godhead of three distinct Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This doctrine is said to be a cryptogram, or algebraic formula, by which opposite truths are exhibited together in order that neither of them may be overlooked or sacrificed in the interests of the other.[1] Undoubtedly the doctrine of the Trinity does unite opposite truths, and in so doing does afford a safeguard against one-sided and narrow ideas of God. But the trinitarian formula is much more significant than a mere assertion of equivalence between one divine Being and three divine Persons. It also sets forth in important measure the revealed relations existing between the divine Persons, relations an apprehension of which not only makes our knowledge of God fuller, more coherent, and more reasonable, but also throws a flood of light upon the practical

[1] Such is the view of Geo. P. Fisher, *Faith and Rationalism*, pp. 53, 54. He says, "The term 'Trinity' is a hieroglyph. It stands for several disconnected propositions collectively taken. It is an algebraic sign for an unknown, mysterious relation. By this term we bring several separate truths into juxtaposition, and thus parry the inference that in affirming one we are denying another."

relations between God and ourselves. The doctrine may be summarized as containing five particulars:

ent 6:4

(*a*) "The Lord our God is one Lord." He is one and indivisible, so that, whatever else may be said of Him, His solity, uniqueness, and indivisibility must be maintained as the primary truth of God. Technically God is declared to be one in being, essence, and nature; and this means that He is one God, and only one, there being none like Him.

(*b*) The manner of divine unity is such that in the indivisible essence of God three several Persons are rightly to be acknowledged as co-equal and co-eternal together. These three Persons are no mere *dramatis personae*, or passing manifestations of one and the same Person, but are fundamentally distinct, so that the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father. Yet these Persons are not separate individuals, but are distinguished by the manner in which they exist in and possess one and the same indivisible essence.

(*c*) The Father is distinguished by the fact that He proceeds from none, but is the unoriginate source of the Godhead. The Son is begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through, διά, the Son. Thus there is a divine monarchy, in which the Father occupies the first place, the Son the second, and the Holy Spirit the third. But the subordination of the second and third Persons does not signify or involve an essential inequality, for all three Persons possess the self-same essence. Nor

do the divine processions involve a temporal succession, for they are timeless and eternal. "The whole three Persons are co-eternal together and co-equal."

(*d*) There is a circumcession or περιχώρησις in the Trinity. That is, the Persons, by reason of their common and indivisible essence, exist in each other — not as parts of a larger whole, but — as equally possessing the fulness of the Godhead. Each Person by Himself is God and Lord, and in each Person the other divine Persons exist in inseparable unity, although without confusion of personality.

(*e*) The outward manifestations of the Trinity, which are sometimes called the divine economies, are based upon and determined by the internal relations of the divine Persons. Although these Persons coinhere in action as well as in essence, working indivisibly in all divine operations, the relation of each Person to these operations is distinct. Upon this fact depends the propriety of attributing diverse operations to distinct Persons. Thus the Scriptures and the Creeds attribute the creation of the world especially to the Father, the redemption of mankind to the Son, and the sanctification of the people of God to the Holy Spirit, although they also plainly teach that the whole Trinity works indivisibly in all these things. It is this same principle of divine economies, and of their determination by the internal relations existing between the divine Persons, that accounts for the fact that the Scriptures speak of the Son as sent into the world by the Father, and

of the Holy Spirit as sent by the Father and the Son. Divine mission, as it is called, involves neither an inferiority in essence of Him who is said to be sent nor any spatial movement. The divine Persons can never cease to be co-equal and omnipresent.

In brief, the doctrine of the Trinity teaches that God is one in essence, subsisting in three Persons, who are mutually related by eternal processions, who coinhere both in essence and in operation, but manifest themselves in distinct economies and missions.

§ 9. These truths are either expressly or impliedly contained in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, which appear to be expansions of the baptismal formula, and which in early ages underwent verbal amendment calculated to exclude heretical misinterpretations. The most explicit statement that has secured catholic authority is contained in the so called Athanasian Symbol;[1] and its language should be carefully studied

[1] It has not been formally received by the Eastern Churches, but is found in certain service books. It is contained in the Latin Office of Prime, and is required to be recited after Morning Prayer in the English Church on certain holy days. It was dropped out by the compilers of the American Prayer Book, but not because of any rejection of its doctrine.

It is thought to have been written in the fifth century, but the author is unknown. Although written as a hymn or psalm rather than as a creed, time and usage have given it creedal value. See A. E. Burn, *The Athanasian Creed and Its Early Commentaries;* G. D. W. Ommaney, *A Critical Dissertation on the Athanasian Creed;* and Daniel Waterland, *A Critical History of the Athanasian Creed.* This last has not lost its value, although written in the 18th century.

We quote the symbol as translated in the English Prayer Book.

and assimilated by theological students. We quote its pertinent clauses.

The Catholic Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;

Neither confounding the Persons: nor dividing the substance. (Essence)

For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son: and another of the Holy Ghost.

But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son: and such is the Holy Ghost.

The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate: and the Holy Ghost uncreate.

The Father incomprehensible,[1] *the Son incomprehensible: the Holy Ghost incomprehensible.*

The Father eternal, the Son eternal: and the Holy Ghost eternal.

And yet they are not three eternals: but one eternal.

As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated: but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.

So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty: and the Holy Ghost Almighty.

And yet they are not three Almighties: but one Almighty.

[1] *Immensus*, or transcending finite and spatial measures, because infinite Spirit. The word has no reference to divine inscrutability. See *Being and Attributes of God*, ch. xi. § 5.

So the Father is God, the Son is God: and the Holy Ghost is God.

And yet they are not three Gods: but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord: and the Holy Ghost Lord.

And yet not three Lords: but one Lord.

For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity: to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be God and Lord;

So are we forbidden by the Catholic Religion: to say there be three Gods, or three Lords.

The Father is made of none: neither created, nor begotten.

The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created, but begotten.

The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son:[1] *neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.*

So there is one Father, not three Fathers: one Son, not three Sons: one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.

And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other: none is greater, or less than another:

But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together: and co-equal.

So that in all things, as is aforesaid: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped.

He therefore that will be saved: must thus think of the Trinity.

The first of our *Articles of Religion* declares that

[1] The Easterns omit "and of the Son," because of their rejection of the *filioque*.

There is but one living and true God, . . . And in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The second Article describes the Son to be *the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father.* And the fifth Article says, *The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son* (*a Patre et Filio procedens*), *is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.* With these Articles should also be compared the Proper Preface for Trinity Sunday: — *Who art one God, one Lord; not one only Person, but three Persons in one Substance. For that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference*[1] *or inequality.*

The Roman and Oriental Churches have in various ways clearly formulated this doctrine; and, with the exception of the Western assertion of an eternal procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son as well as from the Father, no significant difference appears when we compare the definitions which have been issued by ecclesiastical authority in various portions of the Catholic Church. As will be shown when we consider the history of this doctrine, the *filioque* controversy does not necessarily signify a conflict

[1] That is, of glory and essence. The difference of "properties" by which the divine Persons are distinguished is not here denied. See ch. vii. § 4, below.

in fundamental doctrine, but rather a question of provincial right to insert new phrases in the Nicene Creed, and of terminology.[1]

§ 10. This introductory definition of catholic doctrine concerning the Trinity will be more complete if a summary account is given of the chief errors which the catholic doctrine requires us to reject.[2]

(*a*) The first and most obvious of these errors is *tritheism*, or the assertion of threefold divine personality at the expense of unity of essence and being. In the earliest ages Christian believers were not apt to fall into this error, but were none the less freely accused of being tritheists by their pagan assailants. Marcion,[3] Photinus,[4] the Peratae,[5] and certain monophysites of the sixth century[6] are said to have fallen into this heresy — the last named being thus misled by their refusal to distinguish clearly between "nature" and "person"[7] in the doctrine of our Lord's Person. In the eleventh century Roscellin was led by his nominalism — denial of universals — to deny that the three divine Persons possess one and the self-same essence.[8] Dr. William Sherlock

[1] See chh. iii. § 14; vii. § 7, below.

[2] "Errors About God and the Holy Trinity" are concisely defined by Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Christian Dogma*, note 4. See also R. Owen, *Dog. Theol.*, ch. v. §§ 10–13.

[3] See St. Cyril, Jerus., *Catech.*, 16.

[4] See St. Hilary Poit., *de Synod.*, xxii. 56.

[5] See Theodoret, *Haer.*, fab. i.

[6] Blunt, *Dic. of Sects*, *s. v.* "Tritheists."

[7] φύσις and ὑπόστασις.

[8] He was answered by St. Anselm (*Ep.* ii. 35, 41; *de Fide Trin.*,

appeared to teach tritheism in his *Vindication of the Doctrine of the Holy and Ever-Blessed Trinity*, 1691 A.D., and a violent controversy followed.[1] That the popular imagination may easily treat the divine Persons as separate individuals is undoubtedly true,[2] but the general Christian belief in divine unity is too deeply seated for such misconceptions often to develop into formal heresy.

(*b*) The opposite and modalistic heresy of *Sabellianism*,[3] also called monarchianism, owed its origin to a desire to insist upon the true Godhead of Jesus Christ without sacrificing the truth of divine unity. It obliterates the real distinction of Persons in the Godhead, treating Them as *dramatis personae*, as passing modes of the divine, and as economic manifestations of one and the self-same Person. Its first form was the patripassianism of Praxeas, who maintained, early in the third century, that it was no other than the Father who suffered upon the cross. At a later period in that century Sabellius developed this error into a kind of modalism. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are but several names and mani-

2, 3), and his view was condemned at the Council of Soissons in 1092. See R. Seeberg, *Hist. of Doctrines* (transl. by C. E. Hay), § 46; K. R. Hagenbach, *Hist. of Christ. Doctrines*, § 170 (3).

[1] Hagenbach, *op. cit.*, § 262 (6); and English Church histories of that period — close of the 17th century.

[2] R. C. Moberly describes and criticizes a tendency in that direction in *Atonement and Personality*, pp. 82–86. The passage gives valuable cautions against one-sidedness in reckoning with antithetic truths.

[3] See ch. iii. § 5, below.

festations of one Person. The defenders of the Nicene ὁμοούσιος were accused of Sabellianism, and while the charge was quite untrue so far as the orthodox party in general was concerned, Marcellus of Ancyra was led into that heresy by impulsive reaction from Arianism.[1] Sabellianism has been revived in modern times by Swedenborg and Schleiermacher.[2]

(*c*) The Godhead of the second Person of the Trinity has been sacrificed in various ways. The ancient *Ebionites* believed our Lord to be a mere man,[3] and this error was revived by Theodotus and Artemon about the beginning of the third century — *psilanthropism*.[4] This was mixed with a sort of *adoptionism*, or belief that Christ was peculiarly endowed with spiritual gifts and adopted to be Son of God in a special sense. This error was apparently included in the heretical position of Paul of Samosata, condemned by a large council at Antioch, 269, A.D.[5] Origen had asserted the subordination of the Son to the Father in the order of origin, insisting, however, upon His possession of the Father's essence and upon

[1] He was followed on bold lines by Photinus. See W. Bright, *Age of the Fathers*, Vol. I. pp. 156–158, 193, 194; Bethune-Baker, *Early Hist. of Doctrine*, pp. 190–192; Blunt, *Dic. of Sects, s. vv.* "Marcellians"; "Photinians."

[2] See Hagenbach, *op. cit.*, § 295 (4), (6), (8).

[3] See ch. iii. § 2, below.

[4] *Ibid.*, § 4.

[5] See ch. iii. § 9, below. The adoptionist error reappears in the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, in Spain in the 8th century, and in modern Socinianism.

the eternal nature of His generation. Lucian of Antioch in the third century,[1] and his pupil Arius in the fourth century, took over Origen's subordinationist terminology without its accompanying safeguards; and what came to be known as *Arianism* caused the fiercest and most serious doctrinal conflict of Christian history. Arius acknowledged the pre-existence of Christ, the Logos, but maintained His being later in time than the Father by virtue of His sonship, and described Him as a super-angelic but mutable creature, the first of creatures, through whom all other creatures are made. The Council of Nicea excluded this error by declaring Christ to be ὁμοούσιος (of one essence) with the Father; but fifty years of conflict ensued before the battle for orthodoxy was won.[2] And Arianism was in the meantime imbibed by the Goths, and reappeared in Visigothic Spain, where it was finally shut out by the creedal assertion that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son, *filioque*, as well as from the Father.[3]

(*d*) The denial of the divinity of the Holy Spirit was a logical consequence of Arianism, and this error was defended by the Macedonians, who were condemned by the second Ecumenical Council in 381 A.D. They were also called *pneumatomachi*.[4] Some

[1] See pp. 75, 77, below.

[2] See ch. iii. §§ 10, 11, below.

[3] *Ibid.*, § 14; and ch. vii. § 7. Arian views were set forth in the 18th century by Dr. Samuel Clarke, and have been enunciated by certain unitarian writers of later date.

[4] See ch. iii. § 13, below.

Those who fight against the Holy Spirit

of them denied the personality of the Spirit, regarding His name as a rhetorical personification of divine power and sanctifying operation.

(*e*) In their eagerness of controversy with the West, some Oriental writers, mediæval and modern, appear to deny any kind of eternal procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son. Such denial is inconsistent with the ancient consensus of both Eastern and Western doctors.[1]

(*f*) It is equally erroneous to say, as some of the Easterns believe the *filioque* is intended to say, that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son as from a second and independent source. But the *filioque* is not thus interpreted by the West, which agrees with the East in distinguishing the Son's part in the spiration of the third Person as participative and secondary. A fuller definition of Western doctrine is that of the Councils of Lyons, 1274 A.D., and Florence, 1439 A.D., which declares the spiration of the Holy Spirit to be one, and to have one Principle and ultimate Source. This is expressed by saying that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son.[2]

[1] The Orientals attending the Conferences of Bonn, 1874, 1875, were unwilling clearly to acknowledge any eternal procession from the Son. See the two *Reports* edited by H. P. Liddon; and Dr. Pusey's elaborate criticisms, *On the Clause 'And the Son.'* Pusey gives the propositions adopted at Bonn, and his own suggested amendments, on pp. 182–184.

[2] See p. 94, note 3, for the language of Lyons; and p. 234, note 1, for that of Florence.

§ 11. The literature of our subject is very extensive, and only a selection of titles can be given.[1]

(*a*) The history of the doctrine can be studied in the various histories of doctrine, especially those of Hagenbach, Seeberg, Neander, and Fisher, and Bethune-Baker's *Early History of Christian Doctrine.* Harnack's *History of Dogma* gives much valuable material, but lacks coherence and theological insight, exhibiting a tendency to exaggerate the primitive standing of humanitarian views of Christ's Person. Dorner's *History of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ* is also very useful, but is to be read with caution. Fleury, *Church History* (parts of which are translated by Newman and by others); Ceillier, *Histoire Générale des Auteurs Sacres et Ecclesiastiques;* Du Pin, *History of Ecclesiastical Writers* (translated into English); and J. H. Newman's *Arians of the Fourth Century* are more sound. Henri Klee, *Manuel de L'Histoire des Dogmes Chrétiens* (translated into French from the German by Mabire) gives a clear summary.

(*b*) Among patristic and mediæval works should be mentioned Tertullian, *Adv. Praxean;* St. Athanasius, *Contra Arianos; Ad Serapionem Epp. Quatuor*

[1] The lists here given may be supplemented in Latin literature by consulting Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual of Cath. Theol.*, Vol. I. pp. 257–258; and Tanquerey, *de Deo Trino*, p. 171. Dorner's *Christian Doctrine*, Vol. I. pp. 344–345, mentions the chief German works. The articles which treat of subjects connected with the Trinity in Smith and Wace, *Dic. of Christian Biography;* Hastings, *Dic. of the Bible; Dic. of Christ;* and *Encyc. of Religion; The Catholic Encyc.;* and the Schaff-Herzog *Encyc. of Religious Knowledge* contain much useful matter.

(the Divinity of the Holy Spirit); St. Basil, *Adv. Eunomium; de Spiritu Sancto;* St. Gregory Nyss., *Contra Eunomium*; St. Gregory Naz., *Orationes Theologicae;* Didymus, *de Trinitate; de Spiritu Sancto* (extant only in St. Jerome's translation); St. Epiphanius, *Ancoratus;* St. Hilary of Poitiers, *de Trinitate;* St. Ambrose, *de Fide Trinitatis; de Spiritu;* St. Cyril Alex., *Thesaurus de SS. Trinitate;* St. Augustine, *de Trinitate;* St. John Damasc., *de Fide Orthodoxa;* Boethius (?), *de Persona et Duabus Naturis;* St. Anselm, *Monologium;* Peter Lombard, *Sententiae;* St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Pars I.

(*c*) Modern Latin works include Petavius, *de Trinitate* (containing much historical and patristic material); Ruiz, *de Trinitate;* Suarez, *de Deo Uno et Trino;* Perrone, *Praelectiones Theologicae;* Franzelin, *de Deo Trino;* and Tanquerey, *de Deo Trino.* To these should be added the excellent English Roman Catholic work, Wilhelm and Scannell, *Manual of Catholic Theology*, Bk. II. Pt. II.

(*d*) Of Anglican treatises, among the best are Bishop Pearson, *Apostles' Creed*, Arts. i, ii, viii; Bishop Bull, *Defensio Fidei Nicaenae* (translated into English); *Judgment of the Catholic Church on the Necessity of Believing that our Lord Jesus Christ is very God;* Daniel Waterland, *Vindication of Christ's Divinity; Lady Moyer Lectures; The Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity;* Wm. Jones, *Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity;* Geo. Faber, *Apostolicity of Trinitarianism;* Edw. Burton, *Testimonies of the Ante-Nicene Fathers*

to the Doctrine of the Trinity and of the Holy Ghost; Testimonies . . . to the Divinity of Christ; A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed* (passim); Bishop Browne, *Thirty Nine Articles*, Arts. i, ii, v; H. P. Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord;* J. H. Newman, *Select Treatises of St. Athanasius;* F. J. A. Hort, *Two Dissertations; Report of the Proceedings at the Reunion Conference Held at Bonn*, 1874; The same, 1875; E. B. Pusey, *On the Clause, 'And the Son';* H. B. Swete, *Early Hist. of the Doctrine of the Holy Ghost; History of the Doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Spirit; The Holy Spirit in the New Testament;* W. H. Hutchings, *Person and Work of the Holy Ghost;* J. R. Illingworth, *Personality, Human and Divine;* and *Doctrine of the Trinity, Apologetically Considered.* No systematic treatise on the Trinity has appeared in English for some time. The subject is very concisely covered in the writer's *Doctrine of God*, with numerous references.

P. H. Steenstra "The Being of God as Unity & Trinity." 1891

See Hastings E.R.E. | Trinity
| Trinumati
| Tritheism

CHAPTER II

REVELATION OF THE DOCTRINE

I. *In Nature and Reason*

§ 1. From the nature of things, there can be no direct revelation of the Trinity through the visible order, nor can this truth be discovered and established by the natural reason.[1] Yet, as has been shown in the third volume of this series,[2] we gain a sufficient knowledge of God through nature to perceive that certain problems which the idea of divine personality raises are best solved by the doctrine of the Trinity, inasmuch as its truth enables us to believe that the requirements of personal functioning are satisfied within the indivisible essence of God. The eternal relations between the divine Persons afford adequate objects of divine contemplation and love, and a sufficient sphere of personal life, without either an infringement upon divine simplicity or a dependence upon external objects being involved. In brief, natural reason teaches us this much, that the idea of God which is attained by a consideration of natural phenomena, while it falls short of trinitarian doctrine, can be seen, when the Trinity has once been revealed,

[1] See St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxxii. 1.

[2] *Being and Attributes of God*, ch. i. § 5; and ch. x. §§ 6–8. Also below, ch. v. § 10; and ch. vi. § 11.

to find in such doctrine its completion and full rational justification.

§ 2. The correctness of this line of thought appears to be confirmed by the fact that even among the adherents of pagan religious systems, and among pagan philosophers, the tendency to conceive of God in trinitarian terms is wide-spread.[1] It is not meant that pagan believers and thinkers have ever arrived at a clear and coherent trinitarian doctrine of God, such as is taught by the Christian Church, but that a spontaneous and persistent tendency shows itself among them to regard the Deity as in some sense threefold. Some writers have maintained the existence of a trinitarian idea of God in the works of Plato,[2] but have certainly exaggerated its definiteness and significance for the history of Christian doctrine. Professor Paine of the Bangor Theological Seminary, writing from an antitrinitarian standpoint,[3] endeavours to show traces of ethnic trinities in many pagan systems, especially in ancient East Indian, Persian, and Greek thought.[4] Without committing

[1] See Macculloch, *Compar. Religion*, ch. iv; T. Maurice, *Dissertation on the Oriental Trinities;* Levi Paine, *Ethnic Trinities and Their Relations to the Christian Trinity;* Christlieb, *Modern Doubt*, pp. 266, 267.

[2] Cf. St. Augustine, *de Civit. Dei*, x. 22. The subject is fully discussed by C. Morgan, *Trinity of Plato and Philo Judaeus.*

[3] *Ethnic Trinities.*

[4] J. F. Clarke ascribes the origin of the Christian doctrine to trinitarian conceptions in the Egyptian religion: *Ten Great Religions,* ch. vi. § 7. Cf. J. W. Lake, *Plato, Philo, and Paul*, who traces it to Greek thought.

ourselves to an agreement with all his assertions in this regard, and realizing the incoherent and evanescent nature of ethnic trinities, the fact remains that an inchoate trinitarianism is sufficiently wide-spread to challenge enquiry as to its cause.

Professor Paine[1] quotes Aristotle[2] as saying, "Since body has magnitude in *three* directions, it has magnitude in *all* directions: hence three equals all, or is the complete or perfect number." Noting that Aristotle proceeds to cite the Pythagorean argument that "The end, the middle, and the beginning have the number of the whole and are a triad," he quotes him as adding, "Therefore, having received from nature as it were laws of it (*i.e.* the triad), we also employ this number (three) for the holy rites of the gods. Moreover, we apply predicates of common terms in the same manner. For we call the term 'two,' or 'the two,' 'both,' but we do not style them 'all.' But concerning the 'three,' we first use this expression (all), and these forms of language, as has been said, we follow *because nature herself leads the way.*" Commenting on this passage Paine says, "It is interesting to note how Aristotle connected the laws of nature with those of religion and the gods . . . Aristotle does not pursue this thought farther, but plainly he started a line of speculative thought which would logically have led him to a trinitarian conception of God Himself."

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 16, 17.
[2] *De Coelo*, i. 1.

Apart from supernatural revelation, it could, of course, have led only to a vague and precarious trinitarianism at best; but the fact that the greatest scientist and logician of the ancient world detected a law in nature that teaches men to regard divine worship as properly trinitarian is certainly significant, nor is this significance destroyed by Aristotle's failure to advance to a trinitarian theism. He was formulating in his own way what many thoughtful people of subsequent times have perceived — that threefoldness is stamped upon creation in all its departments. This is found in all its measures, both spatial and temporal,[1] in the constitution of man's nature,[2] in his psychical faculties as they are commonly called,[3] in human logic,[4] and in human society where personality realizes and perpetuates itself by means of father, mother, and child.[5] As has just been acknowledged in Aristotle's case, the law of threefoldness could never have afforded an adequate basis of a definite trinitarian doctrine of God; and ethnic trinities derive what coherence they are thought by some to have from their being contem-

[1] Length, breadth, and height, and past, present, and future.

[2] Body, soul, and spirit, or physical, mental, and moral.

[3] Intellectual, emotional and volitional. Cf. ch. viii. § 9 (*b*), below, for more subtle examples discussed by St. Augustine. It hardly needs to be said that these "faculties" are not separate organs, but distinctions in the functioning of an indivisible mind.

[4] Which in deduction proceeds syllogistically with the use of three terms and three judgments.

[5] Cf. ch. viii. § 9 (*a*), p. 280, below.

plated from a Christian standpoint, or else, as with the trinity of Plotinus, from a desire to show that the Christian doctrine is not original with Christianity.[1] Modern historical investigation has confirmed and established the fact that the Christian doctrine of the Trinity was not derived from Greek philosophy, but from the teaching of Christ and of His apostles. The so-called ethnic trinities never possessed a definite and living significance for pagan believers; and the teaching of the New Testament constitutes a revelation, the contents of which could never, apart from supernatural revelation, have determined the theistic beliefs of mankind.[2]

[1] *E.g.* Levi Paine, *op. cit.;* and J. F. Clarke, *Ten Great Religions*, as cited above. On Plotinus' trinitarian conception, see *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. v.* "Neoplatonism"; Chas. Bigg, *Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, pp. 248–253; J. H. Newman, *Arians*, pp. 89–95. His trinity consisted of τὸ ἕν, ὁ νοῦς, ἡ ψυχή.

[2] See Illingworth, *Trinity*, chh. ii–vi, esp. pp. 74–83; Dorner, *Christ. Doctrine*, Vol. I. pp. 362–365. Macculloch, *Compar. Religion*, p. 103, says, "These various hints of a triad in the Divine existence show that man cannot rest satisfied with a sterile monotheism. He will either fall back upon polytheism, or else formulate some kind of Trinitarian doctrine. But the latter, when not stamped with the authority of revelation, will never become a tenet held with the force of passionate conviction by the multitude of believers." "It is absolutely true to say that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity has been for eighteen centuries [quoting *Lux Mundi*, p. 90] 'the safeguard of a pure monotheism against everything which menaces the life of religion.'" Cf. A. H. Strong, *Syst. Theol.*, pp. 351, 352.

The view of W. W. Olsson, *Personality Human and Divine*, pp. 99–117; and of Watts, *New Apologetic*, p. 195, that ethnic trinities are "residuary fragments" of primitive knowledge of God, gained by revelation, receives no support among modern scholars.

§ 3. Yet when men have once been clearly taught the threefold personal subsistence of God, the threefoldness of the handiwork of God acquires a meaning which is too obvious wholly to be disregarded. While it is perfectly true that we may not assume a likeness to exist between the Creator and the creature, it does not appear unreasonable to look for some traces of the nature of God in the nature of His creatures. Therefore when we find that the divine threefoldness which Christian doctrine teaches has a finite reflection in nature — a reflection which is especially noticeable in man, whom we believe in some sense to be created in the image of God, — the inference does not seem to be far-fetched or fanciful, that the threefoldness of the creature is causally connected with the trinitarian nature of God, and constitutes a kind of incipient revelation of it.[1] Ethnic trinities may be regarded as exhibiting at once the reality of this natural revelation and its insufficiency, when taken by itself, to bring even the wisest thinkers to a determinate knowledge of the ever Blessed Trinity. Our conclusion, briefly stated, is that the self-manifesta-

[1] Macculloch, *op. cit.*, p. 88, asks if ethnic trinities "were the incomplete products of the universal religious consciousness to which God never fails to speak, and to reveal the truth, if only in part?" He also quotes with approval from Schlegel, *Hist. of Liter.*, p. 146, to the effect that threefoldness "is the universal form of being given by the First Cause to all His works — the seal of Deity, if we may so speak, stamped on all the thoughts of the mind and all the forms of nature." Cf. some remarks by R. Vaughan in a thoughtful article on the Trinity in *Church Quarterly Rev.*, April, 1910, pp. 127, 128.

tion of God through nature is the beginning of a revelation of the Blessed Trinity — a primary alphabet, so to speak, which prepares the way for more significant intimations, but which does not obviate the necessity of supernatural revelation for our acquisition of knowledge of the three divine Persons who subsist in the indivisible essence of God.

II. *Supernatural Revelation*

§ 4. The rule of faith requires that we shall reckon that to be a genuine content of supernatural revelation which is both taught by the Catholic Church of all the ages and contained in the Scriptures. In other words, having had our doctrine defined for us by the Church, our assurance that genuinely catholic dogma is guarded from substantial error by the Holy Spirit does not remove the necessity of verifying its truth, and of deepening our hold upon its fulness, by resort to the Scriptures which the same Holy Spirit has inspired. For if we would enter with sufficient success upon the mind of the Spirit, we must consider all the ways in which He affords His guidance to us. One who depends exclusively upon dogmatic definitions does not possess that fulness and manifoldness of mental apprehension that is needed to produce an intelligent and secure faith. To insist upon this in no wise militates against the further fact that one who makes the Scriptures the sole source and rule of faith is unequal to the task of defining the teaching of the Scriptures with freedom

from individualistic preconceptions and from danger of error.[1]

§ 5. The Scriptures constitute a divinely provided record and memorial of the progress and phenomena of supernatural revelation. These phenomena are very numerous and complex, and we have to distinguish between the contexts in which God has willed to enshrine His teaching and that teaching itself. We also have to allow for the progressiveness of revelation, and to interpret the relatively defective teaching of its earlier stages as parts of a revelation which cannot be sufficiently understood in its divine meaning without taking into account the whole process and its finished product — the faith once for all delivered. To neglect this principle is as contrary to sound reason as it is to refuse to employ our knowledge of mature manhood in interpreting the significance of childhood. But it would be equally unreasonable to regard a child as actually possessed of the characteristics of full-grown manhood, and a parallel error is involved in supposing that either the first readers, or even the writers, of Old Testament documents understood the fuller teaching to which these Scriptures were an inspired introduction.

The fact remains that the Scriptures are concerned with a process of revelation which is continuous and at unity with itself. The mind which imparted divine meaning to the earliest Scriptures is no other than

[1] The rule of faith has been considered more at large in *Authority Eccles. and Biblical*, ch. viii.

that which emerges into clearer view in New Testament teaching. The inference which should be drawn, so far as the task before us is concerned, is this: If the doctrine of the Trinity emerges in New Testament teaching, ground must have been broken for such teaching in the earlier stages of revelation which are recorded in the Old Testament. The further inference should be made that isolated parts of revelation — especially in its early stages — do not afford an adequate basis for ascertaining and proving the truths thus gradually made known. That is, the proof-text method is unreliable. The proper method of proving Christian doctrines by means of biblical evidence is inductive. This means that in order to prove the doctrine of the Trinity we must ascertain whether a general consideration of the whole course of revelation, and of the manifold phenomena by which it was attended, warrants the hypothesis with which catholic doctrine teaches us to undertake our induction, and whether such consideration justifies the conclusion that the faith which was revealed in many fragmentary parts and in many manners in the prophets, and which was more articulately proclaimed by God in His Son, that this faith includes the doctrine of the Trinity.[1]

§ 6. The task immediately before us is to exhibit the stages of supernatural revelation of the Trinity, as they are recorded in Holy Scripture.[2] In the

[1] On biblical interpretation and evidence, see *Authority, Eccles. and Biblical*, ch. vii. Pt. II.

[2] It is sufficient at this point to refer to A. B. Davidson, in Hast-

next chapter we shall treat of the work of defining our doctrine which had to be undertaken by the Church; and then we shall proceed to an inductive consideration of biblical evidence.

The narrative of man's creation and primitive state, whether it be taken as properly historical or as largely symbolical,[1] plainly implies that our first parents enjoyed authentic relations with the one true God, and no assured results of modern investigation are inconsistent with this conclusion.[2] The subsequent narratives of Genesis, however, show that sinful mankind soon fell away from this knowledge of God, and that polytheism was generally prevalent among ancient peoples, infecting the ideas even of those to whom God especially revealed Himself. It is this condition of things that is found in the most ancient period of which modern investigation is able to take cognizance.[3]

§ 7. (*a*) Polytheism and trinitarianism are mutually

ings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *s. v.* "God (in O T)"; the same writer's *Theol. of the Old Test.*; Hugh M. Scott, in Hastings, *op. cit.*, extra vol., *s. v.* "Trinity"; Jas. Orr, *Side Lights on Christ. Doctrine*, pp. 39–44; and W. H. Griffith Thomas, in Hastings, one vol. *Dic. of Bib.*, *s. v.* "Trinity." Specific references will mostly be postponed to our treatment of biblical proof in ch. iv.

[1] On the non-necessity for the Christian doctrine of inspiration, and for theological interpretation, of belief that the narrative constitutes literal history, see the author's *Evolution and The Fall*, pp. 119–123, 130–132, 141; and *Authority, Eccles. and Biblical*, ch. vii. §§ 5, 6, where other references are given.

[2] See the author's *Evol. and the Fall*, Lec. v. *passim.*

[3] The original state of mankind has left no traces which can be the subject of such investigation. See the reference just given.

opposed; and so long as the former held the field, no real step could be taken in acquiring knowledge of the Divine Trinity. Consequently the first stage of the self-revelation of God consisted in a manifestation of Himself as essentially one, and in an insistent proclamation of the corollary that the gods of the heathen "are but idols." This great and initial lesson of divine unity and solity was not easily assimilated by Israel; and long after it had become imbedded in the Law,[1] its practical realization was confined to divinely inspired prophets, and to a small remnant of the chosen people. Consequently insistence upon divine unity continued to be a chief burden of prophecy throughout the Old Testament period. So long as the Israelites were inclined to believe in gods many and lords many, a clear revelation of three divine Persons would have been interpreted as a revelation of three gods, and would inevitably have had tritheistic meaning.[2]

§ 8. (*b*) Yet, in a process of revelation which had for its aim the manifestation of the Divine Trinity, a manner of proclaiming divine unity must have been employed which would prepare spiritual men for the reception of trinitarian teaching. And we find in

[1] Our view of the antiquity of the Law does not, of course, depend upon the dating of the documents of the existing Pentateuch.

[2] St. Gregory Naz., *Theol. Orat.*, v. 26, 27, says that "it was not safe, while the divinity of the Father was not yet acknowledged, that the Son should be clearly proclaimed; nor, while that of the Son was not received, that the Holy Spirit (to use a bold expression) should be imposed on us."

fact that, while no clear revelations of the truth of threefold divine personality were vouchsafed to the Israelites before the coming of Christ, the door to knowledge of the Three-in-One was kept open; and the manner of teaching of divine unity was not that which would be adopted under parallel conditions by a unitarian teacher. The pluralities found in the name Elohim, and in the use of pronouns having divine reference, may have represented survivals of polytheistic conceptions and modes of speech. But the significant fact remains that they continued to be employed by divinely inspired teachers of monotheism. A unitarian standpoint would have required their elimination from prophetic teaching. It is quite unnecessary for our argument, and is inconsistent with critical conclusions, to maintain that the Old Testament writers were conscious of a trinitarian significance in their language. Our contention is simply this, that the inspiration which moved the ancient prophets to insist upon divine unity did not move them to adopt the method of proclaiming this truth which a scrupulous unitarian would employ, but one which left the possibility of plural personality in the Godhead an open question — one which, when regarded from the standpoint of completed revelation, is not unreasonably regarded as intended by the Holy Spirit to prepare the way for the trinitarian teaching of the New Testament.[1]

[1] See Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, Lec. ii. *init.* Kurtz, *Sacred History*, § 2, parag. 2, *observation*, says that "the *revelation* of this

The same standpoint of completed revelation, and our belief in the presence of one divine mind in every stage of the process, lead us to interpret other peculiar passages of the Old Testament as due to the influence of the trinitarian goal of revelation upon its earlier stages. The threefold theophany to Abraham[1] affords an example; as does also the threefold benediction which the priests were commanded to use, with the added comment, "So shall they put My Name upon the children of Israel,"[2] as if its threefold iteration was especially in accord with the reality which it signified. Another instance is the threefold ascription of praise rendered by the Seraphim of Isaiah's vision, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts";[3] and still another is the seemingly trinitarian description of the creation of the heavens, "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.[4]

Triune Essence belongs to history and is its subject; hence, the consciousness of it did not originally belong to human knowledge, but was made attainable through gradual process of revelation. Now as we should study and judge the history of former generations not merely according to their own imperfect light, but also according to the perfect light of our own times, even so the triune being of God, which influenced history from the beginning and is presupposed by it, must be described according to the measure of our present knowledge, previous to the consideration of history itself."

[1] Gen. xviii.

[2] Numb. vi. 24–27.

[3] Isa. vi. 3.

[4] Psa. xxxiii. 6.

To these phenomena should be added certain peculiarities of messianic prophecy—peculiarities which could not have been clearly understood before the coming of the promised Messiah,[1] but which from the standpoint of the New Testament can be seen to be backward shadows of later and fuller manifestations. The Messiah was to be David's Son, and yet He is also described in prophecy as David's Lord, and He is not the only Person to whom the prophecy in question gives the divine name.[2] Isaiah wrote that the Virgin's Son should be called "Immanuel"—God with us;[3] and that the promised child, who should sit upon David's throne, should be called "Mighty God."[4] These are examples of various prophecies which, when taken together, clearly imply that the Messiah was to be very God as well as man, and yet should not be personally identified with God the Father.

The Old Testament also refers in various ways to the Holy Spirit, and in terms that indicate some kind of distinction between the Father and the Spirit[5]—a distinction which emerges too often to be regarded as purely rhetorical. But His personality is not clearly or convincingly taught in the Old Testament,

[1] Cf. 1 Pet. i. 10–12.

[2] Psa. cx. 1. Cf. St. Matt. xxii. 41–45; St. Mark xii. 35–37; St. Luke xx. 41–44.

[3] Isa. vii. 14. – look up?

[4] Ch. ix. 6.

[5] *E. g.* Gen. i. 2; Numb. xxvii. 18; Neh. ix. 20; Job xxxiii. 4; Psa. li. 11; Hag. ii. 5; Isa. xlii. 1; lxi. 1 (cf. St. Luke iv. 18).

Psa. 137. The Omnipresence of God's spirit

Exodus 33:13, 14.

although what is said plainly leaves room for the later Christian teaching on this point.[1]

§ 9. The elements of trinitarian teaching which our Christian standpoint enables us to detect in the earlier stages of revelation could not be understood in ante-Christian ages; but it would be rash to conclude that Jewish students of Old Testament prophecy were unable to advance in their ideas of God beyond a bald unitarianism. We must not make our ignorance a basis of inference; and we are very ignorant of the ideas of God which were cherished in the latter days by spiritually minded Jews, who meditated upon prophecy and, like the aged Simeon, were "looking for the consolation of Israel."[2] However vague their anticipations may have been, their imaginations must have been controlled to a degree by those elements of messianic prophecy which, as we have seen, imply some kind of social and plural mystery in Jehovah, without justifying belief in more than one God. The Father, the Messiah, and the Holy Spirit must have been distinguished by many readers of the Old Testament, for they are there distinguished; and the divine rank assigned to the Messiah could hardly escape notice, although it must have raised questions which could not be answered.[3]

[1] One of the most suggestive passages is Isa. xlviii. 16, "The Lord God hath sent me, *and His Spirit*."

[2] St. Luke ii. 25.

[3] Cf. the enigma which Christ placed before His adversaries: St. Matt. xxii. 41–45 and parallel passages.

Whatever may have been the case with ordinary devout Jews, we have evidence that, in higher circles, "Jewish theology in the period between the Old Testament and Christ made some progress towards a trinitarian view of God."[1] A tendency to a unitarian conception of God as transcendent and remote induced a further tendency to dwell upon the necessity of mediation, and to hypothecate the existence of one or more personal mediators. This led, on the one hand, to a development of angelology, and, on the other hand, to a mediatorial conception of the Messiah. The Word of the prophets, מימרא was personified in Palestinian schools, and described in mediatorial language. In Alexandria, Philo, whose lifetime partly coincided with the earthly life of our Lord, developed an elaborate speculation concerning the Logos, in which he sought to combine Greek philosophy with Old Testament teaching. His thought is bold, and superficially considered seems at times to anticipate Christian theology; but his footing is insecure, and his language is often self-

[1] Hugh M. Scott, in Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, extra vol., *s. v.* "Trinity," p. 308. This article deals usefully with the subject-matter of this section, and gives references to sources. Cf. also, in the same vol., the arts. on "Development of Doctrine in the Apocryphal Period," by W. Fairweather; and on "Philo," by Jas. Drummond. In the main part of this Dic., see *s. vv.* "Holy Spirit," B, by H. B. Swete; and "God (in N T)," p. 207, by W. Sanday. See also Jas. Drummond, *Philo Judaeus or the Jewish-Alex. Philos. in its Development and Completion*, 2 vols., Lond., 1888; C. Bigg, *Christ. Platonists of Alex.*, pp. 7–26; H. P. Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 62–73; *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. v.* "Philo," VII, by A. Edersheim.

Moore - Intermediaries in Jewish Theology
Harvard Theological Review
1922. P41-85

contradictory and fanciful.[1] He identifies the Logos with the Angel of Old Testament manifestations, and describes Him as divine. At times he seems to regard Him as a person, but not consistently, and calls Him a "second God," who embraces both God and man. On the whole, Philo gives us an objective illustration of the contention that the Old Testament suggested lines of speculation which involved elements of trinitarian thought, without enabling its readers, apart from knowledge of the Gospel, to attain to secure conclusions or to determinate trinitarian conceptions. Palestinian literature connects the Word with the Messiah and calls Him "the Heavenly Man," "the Eternal One" and the "Son of God," without after all rising above an Arian conception.

The Spirit was also treated of by Jewish writers of this age, both Palestinian and Alexandrian, and was dimly perceived to be distinct from the Father and from the Logos. The view gained expression that he was to come with the Christ. But the ancient Jew could not combine these half apprehended elements of trinitarian teaching; and his speculations, useful as they have become to confirm our impression that trinitarian implications can be discovered in the

[1] A. Edersheim says, in *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. v.* "Philo" (Vol. IV. p. 379), "But the Apostle [St. John] deals with it" [the Logos] "not, like Philo, in illustrations, but — if not in definitions, which were impossible — in definite propositions, which clearly mark not only the Personality of the Logos, but His relations to God, to the World, and to man. On the other hand, the Logos of Philo is full of difficulties, contradictions, and perplexities."

Old Testament, then needed to be supplemented by further revelation before they could be developed into a true theology.

§ 10. (*c*) The appearance of the long-expected Messiah brought within the apprehension of those who were spiritually capable of recognizing Him a Person whom they came to know as truly divine, and yet as distinct from the Father — the only-begotten Son of the Father. The followers of Christ, indeed, learned the new lesson slowly; but the coincidence in His case of a unique moral perfection with assumptions and claims that no perfect one could make unless He was divine, the character of His works and of His teaching, and the evidence that in Him all the messianic prophecies were fulfilled, prepared their minds to apprehend the significance of His victory over death. They perceived that He was divinely "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.[1]"

§ 11. (*d*) Further than this, the teaching of Christ made known to His disciples a third divine Person — that Holy Spirit of whom the prophets had spoken, but whose distinct personality was now for the first time made clearly manifest, and whose divine rank in being was signified in the threefold Name of God into which all believers in Christ were to be baptized.[2]

[1] Rom. i. 4. On Christ's teaching concerning Himself, see ch. iv. § 10, below.

[2] St. Matt. xxviii. 19. The genuineness of this passage has been recently assailed, but on inadequate and *a priori* grounds.

This Spirit Christ promised to send from the Father, and declared Him to be the Spirit of truth, capable of guiding men into all truth, another Comforter.[1]

Accordingly, when, on the day of Pentecost which followed our Lord's ascension, the disciples received the Spirit, they recognized Him to be what the Lord had declared Him to be, and placed all their ministry under His sovereign guidance and control. In thus doing they distinguished His personality and conceived of Him as divine.

§ 12. (*e*) The last stage of revelation of the Trinity was the guidance of the apostolic mind into the truth that although the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are personally distinct, and each is divine in the full sense of that word, yet this threefold mystery illuminates and fortifies rather than obscures the truth declared of old, that there is but one indivisible God over all the earth. Their understandings being enlightened by reflection upon the completed drama of the Gospel, and by interior illumination from the Spirit, the apostles were enabled to render due honour to the several divine Persons without doing so in terms that would have obscured the unity of God. Throughout the New Testament we find the Godhead of the Son and of the Holy Spirit referred to in terms that forbid us to separate either of them from the Father's essence. In employing this method of speech, the apostles adhered faithfully to the method of Christ, who revealed His divine claim by

[1] We return to this in ch. iv. § 11, below.

exhibiting His unity with the Father and His divine sonship.[1]

The truth which was subsequently guarded in the Church by the term homoousios, ὁμοούσιος, thus became the final word of revelation; and it teaches that the manner in which each of three Persons is God is determined by the manner in which these Persons severally possess the one indivisible essence of God. The Three are what they are by reason of mutual relationships within the Godhead, and each Person is declared to be divine in terms that imply these internal relationships. The Father is not otherwise God than as Father of the eternal Word; the Son is not otherwise God than as begotten of the Father; and the Holy Spirit is God as proceeding from the Father through the Son. If the Godhead of the Father is at times more directly declared than that of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, this is due to His being the Father, in whom the other two Persons are involved, and to the inspired habit of asserting the divinity of the second and third Persons in the terms of their relations to the Father. God being indivisible, an acknowledgment that Christ is the only-begotten of God, and that the Holy Spirit proceedeth from Him, is in effect an emphatic assertion that these Persons have no other essence and rank in being than He from whom they eternally proceed.

[1] See ch. iv. § 12, below, for fuller exposition and references.

CHAPTER III

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEFINITIONS

I. *Ante-Nicene Period*

§ 1. The Christian Church of pentecostal days inherited from the older dispensation a firm belief that there is but one God — a God who will not share His glory with any other being. But she had also learned to regard Christ as God, and to yield divine honour to the Holy Spirit. Yet the first Christians did not confuse the Persons whom they worshipped, but named the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit side by side as severally distinct. Serious reflection upon these elements of belief and practice was certain to raise the important problem of reconciling the belief in divine unity with an acknowledgment of three Persons as divine. But this problem did not trouble the minds of the first Christians, although a sound instinct led them to refer to the second and third Persons of the Trinity in terms which enable us to perceive that they did not regard them as separate Beings. In brief, their monotheism was not weakened by their trinitarianism.

There are at least two reasons why the problem which we have mentioned did not trouble Christian believers of the pentecostal age. In the first place,

they were too much absorbed in practically applying what they had seen and heard, and in proclaiming the Gospel of salvation, to concern themselves with the speculative problems which their message was to suggest to the minds of detached and philosophical thinkers. The revelation of Christ and of the Spirit came to them as a blessed experience to celebrate rather than as a problem to solve.[1] The second reason was the non-speculative and purely practical nature of the minds of the first Christians. The Gospel came in the first age almost exclusively to men in the lower and middle ranks of life. Its original recipients knew nothing of, and cared nothing for, metaphysical questions. They were too much engaged in trying to live to have time for mental speculation, or to acquire the mental training which imparts interest and value to speculative problems. They were splendid witnesses to the contents of their unique experience; but their very qualifications as witnesses unfitted them for the work of formulating their message in the philosophical terms of reflective thought.

But the truths which they proclaimed, and handed on to their spiritual successors for permanent preservation and world-wide propagation, were to be published among the learned as well as among the ignorant,

[1] The doctrine of the Trinity was revealed in terms of experience. The purpose of dogma is to preserve the true conception of that experience for those whose changed conditions of experience and thought make its assimilation difficult.

Note

among philosophers as well as among ordinary folk. Consequently the problems which were ignored by the first generation of believers, but which were not on that account less serious in their nature and bearings, were certain to emerge into prominence when the Gospel was proclaimed in philosophical circles and began to be scrutinized by critically minded pagans. Difficult questions were to be asked; and the most difficult of them all was this: How can there be three divine Persons if there is but one Divine Being?

It was the effort of thinkers to face this problem that gave birth to trinitarian theology, and to the dogmatic definitions of the Councils which guard the Church's faith in the one and indivisible Godhead of three divine Persons. The question was indeed beyond human solving, but its emergence necessitated careful and technical definition of the revealed truths by which it was suggested, lest its difficulty should lead men to misconceive and sacrifice one truth in the supposed interests of another. The Church's purpose in defining was to preserve inviolate the mysteries which she had received from God, but which she did not pretend to explain. Her mission was not to solve problems, but to proclaim in the interests of salvation the glorious experiences of her early life. To this end the exigencies of misleading theories compelled her to define these experiences, and there she stopped; for she aimed only to make clear what she had seen and heard, in terms that could not be mistaken by those who desired to

receive her testimony. It was her *experience* that was defined, not her speculations concerning this experience; and this fact determines the meaning of the terms which she came to employ,—not the sources from which she appropriated them.[1]

This chapter is devoted to a general survey of the development of ecclesiastical definitions of the doctrine of the Trinity.[2] No attempt will be made, however, to give more critical attention to details or to historical problems connected with the development of doctrine than is necessary in order to fulfil the purpose of this work, which is to exhibit the doctrine of the Trinity in that form and meaning in which the Church has received and defined it.

§ 2. We do not learn of serious attempts to define the doctrine of the Trinity before the beginning of

[1] Cf. ch. i. §§ 3, 4, 7, above.

[2] For general bibliography of this subject, see ch. i. § 11 (*a*), above. The works there mentioned of Hagenbach, Seeberg, Bethune-Baker, Harnack, Dorner, and Newman are especially useful. To these may be added, Hefele, *Hist. of the Councils;* Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, §§ 96–98; Dorner, *Christ. Doc.*, Vol. I. pp. 361–412 (a summary). On the ante-Nicene period, see also Bishop Bull, *Defence of the Nicene Faith; Judgment of the Cath. Church;* G. S. Faber, *Apostolicity of Trinitarianism;* Ewd. Burton, *Testimonies of the Ante-Nicene Fathers to the Doc. of the Trinity; Testimonies . . . to the Divinity of Christ;* H. P. Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 419–425. Of dictionary articles covering the whole patristic period may be mentioned, *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. vv.* "Trinity, the Holy," by S. Cheetham; and "Christology," by Ph. Schaff; Hastings, *Dic. of Christ*, App. *s. v.* "Christ in the Early Church," by A. R. Whitham; Schaff-Herzog, *Encyc. of Relig. Knowl.*, *s. v.* "Christology," by D. S. Schaff; Suicer, *Thesaurus*, *s. v.* τριάς (confined to Greek theology).

the third century and the rise of the monarchian heresies of that age. But during the second century ecclesiastical writers were obliged to combat Judaistic and gnostic ideas which were inconsistent with trinitarian doctrine, and the term Logos, employed by St. John, received some emphasis and suggested some speculation.

Two opposite errors concerning the Person of Christ emerged at early dates, — a denial of our Lord's divinity and the docetic heresy. The first of these was supported by the Ebionites and by Cerinthus. The Ebionites were Hebrew Christians who magnified the Law and acknowledged the messiahship of our Lord, but regarded Him as purely human and denied His virgin-birth. They rejected St. Paul's Epistles. Their sect appears to have originated in the early years of the second century. The Nazarenes probably should not be identified with them, although their orthodoxy as to our Lord's Person was somewhat shrunken.[1] The only Ebionite whose individuality emerges in history is Cerinthus, whose career began before the death of St. John.[2] He was as much gnostic as Ebionite in his theories.

[1] On the Ebionites, see Lightfoot, *Dissertations on the Apostolic Age*, on "St. Paul and the Three," pp. 73 *et seq.* (also found in his *Epis. to the Gal.*); L. Pullan, *Hist. of Early Christianity*, pp. 207–213; Bethune-Baker, *Early Hist. of Christ. Doc.*, pp. 63–65; *Cath. Encyc.*, *s. v.* "Ebionites."

[2] Cf. the story of St. John's meeting him in public baths, and fleeing. St. Iren., *Adv. Haer.*, iii. 3, 4. See Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 65, 66.

He regarded Christ's divine Sonship as won by His early life, and as conferred by the descent of the Spirit of God upon Him in the form of a dove. Thus the divine in Him was considered to be merely an endowment. There was no hypostatic union of the divine and human natures in one Person; and our Lord was not acknowledged to be a second Person in the Godhead. The fourth Gospel was said to have been written because of this heresy.[1]

Docetism constituted a denial of the reality of our Lord's human flesh and human experiences.[2] It found its chief supporters among the Gnostics; and although not directly related to the doctrine of the Trinity, was based upon an antitrinitarian philosophy. The Gnostics were in fact anti-Christian, and attempted to combine certain elements of revelation with Oriental and Greek conceptions in order to develop a coherent philosophy of God and the universe.[3] They were divided into a number of sects,

[1] So St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, III. ii. 7.

[2] Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 79–81; *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. vv.* "Docetæ"; and "Docetism," by Geo. Salmon; Hagenbach, *Hist. of Doc.*, § 22 (6); W. Bright, *St. Leo on the Incarn.*, notes 28, 31; W. Sanday, *Christologies Anc. and Mod.*, pp. 7–10. St. John appears to combat this error in his first Epistle, chh. i. 1–3; ii. 22; iv. 2 *et seq.* Cf. 2 St. John 7.

[3] On Gnosticism, see Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *s. v.* "Gnosticism" (in N. T.); Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 79–92; Dorner, *Person. of Christ*, Div. I. Vol. I. pp. 221–252; C. Bigg, *Christ. Platonists*, pp. 27–35; L. Pullan, *Hist. of Early Christianity*, ch. x; J. P. Arendsen, in *Cath. Encyc.*, *s. v.* "Gnosticism"; G. Krager, in Schaff-Herzog; *Ency.*, *s. v.* "Gnosticism"; *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. vv.* "Gnosticism";

having different systems; but two doctrines were widely held among them: — that matter is inherently evil, and that a series of emanations from God fills the gap between the Supreme Deity and the visible universe. If matter is evil, there can, of course, be no real union of the Godhead and human flesh in one Person. The drama of the Gospels was therefore regarded as docetic — an outward seeming, which only the unspiritual would take to be evidence that in Christ dwelt "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."[1] The Gnostic substituted his elaborate series of æons or emanations for the mediation of one person — that is, for the union of the divine and human natures in Christ. And this system was no mere modification of trinitarian doctrine, but was essentially pagan, and quite excluded it.

From the modern point of view many of the gnostic ideas appear grotesque, and it is difficult for us to understand why they should have endangered Christian belief. They were, however, congenial to the age, and were put forward by some of the most pretentious and brilliant thinkers of the day. The orthodox Christian belief was regarded by many as unintelligent, and there was real danger that catholic doctrine would be overshadowed, even among professing Christians, and subverted by a pagan philosophy

"Æon"; "Basilides"; "Cainites"; "Carpocrates"; "Cerdo"; "Cerinthus"; "Encratites"; "Marcion"; "Menander"; "Ogdoad"; "Ophites"; "Pistis Sophia"; "Prunikos"; "Simon Magus"; "Sophia"; "Valentinus"; R. Seeberg, *Hist. of Doc.*, §§ 10, 11.

[1] Col. ii. 9.

that pretended to make Christianity more intellectual and spiritual.

Ecclesiastical writers naturally pointed out the novelty of Gnosticism, and the apostolic traditions of local Churches were appealed to.[1] The baptismal creeds took on the character of formal tests of orthodoxy among Christian believers, and were perhaps amplified in order more explicitly to exclude gnostic ideas.[2] But the necessity that Christian teachers should overcome gnostic arguments with their own weapons — with philosophical arguments — became increasingly apparent, and the terms of Greek philosophy, which then constituted common coin among the intelligent,[3] began to be employed freely for definition and defence of the traditional faith. Among the second-century apologists who did battle for the faith, and who began the difficult work of formulating catholic doctrine in terms of speculative thought, the most eminent were Justin Martyr, Theophilus, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, and, in relation to Gnosticism, St. Irenaeus.

[1] St. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.;* Tertullian, *Adv. Marcion; de Praescriptione Haereticorum; adv. Valentinianos; de Resurrectione Carnis; de Anima;* Hippolytus, *Philosophumena* (Refutation of all Heresies); were the chief writers against Gnosticism. Cf. Seeberg, *Hist. of Doc.*, §§ 10, 11.

[2] A. McGiffert, *Apostles' Creed* (1902), pp. 9–21, thinks the Apostles' Creed was first framed at Rome in order to exclude Marcion's errors. This is wrong. See *Authority, Eccles. and Biblical*, ch. iv. § 2 (esp. notes on pp. 104, 105).

[3] In other words, they were not, as is alleged, borrowed from the Gnostics.

Their work was difficult, because the Christian faith introduces us to the most baffling subjects and problems with which our minds attempt to grapple. Naturally, therefore, the language of these pioneers of theology was often crude, and some of the phrases which they employed could not stand the test of time and of more mature orthodox thought.[1] We are not here concerned, however, with their crudities, but with their work of breaking ground for their theological successors.

§ 3. St. John had appropriated the term Logos in the prologue of his Gospel as a suitable name of the Son of God — suitable to connote the eternal and mediatorial aspects of His Person. This Logos was declared to be eternal, distinct from God the Father, and Himself God, the Agent of creation, the Life and the Light of men, who became flesh and dwelt among us, revealing Himself to be the only-begotten Son of God. It was the task of the second-century apologists to develop the Christian implications of this term, as affording an antidote of gnostic and other pagan speculations. We say its "Christian implications" for the term was used by non-Christian thinkers and required careful definition and explication, if it was to be retained in catholic the-

[1] Petavius, in his great *de Trinitate* unduly disparaged the orthodoxy of ante-Nicene writers. Bishop Bull in reply, *Defence of the Nicene Faith*, erred in the opposite direction, and there has been a tendency among many to treat them as practically infallible. J. H. Newman gives a sounder estimate: *Arians*, pp. 179–200. Cf. R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. I. pp. 285–294.

ology.[1] Several reasons forbade its being abandoned. In the first place its use in the New Testament gave it an authoritative value which could not be disregarded. Again, the term was congenial to the thought of the age, and for that reason had apologetical value, provided it could be saved from pagan implications. Finally, it served as a suitable complement to the term Son of God, by emphasizing those eternal aspects of Christ's Person which that term did not clearly express.[2]

The exigencies of controversy with the Gnostics led the apologists to dwell upon the relations of the Logos,[3] and they employed language which at times seemed to imply a denial of His eternal existence.[4] This was especially the case with Justin Martyr and Theophilus. Two Greek words, differing only by

[1] Fairbairn, *Philos. of Christ. Religion*, pp. 454, 455, derives the theological use of the term from Heraclitus through the Stoics and Philo. See above, pp. 45, 46; and Illingworth, *Trinity*, pp. 87–93, 121–125; R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. I. pp. 45–47; Hagenbach, *Hist. of Doc.*, §§ 40, 41; Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *s. v.* "Logos," II, by G. T. Purves.

[2] Whereas the term Son connotes derivation of essence and subordination, the term Word connotes co-eternity and mediatorial office. See J. H. Newman, *Arians*, ch. ii. § 3.

[3] On the early Logos theology, see Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, ch. ix.; C. Bigg, *Christ. Platonists*, *passim;* Dorner, *Person of Christ*, Div. I. Vol. I. pp. 22–30, 260–326; R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. I. pp. 186 *et seq.;* Hagenbach, *Hist. of Doc.*, §§ 42, 43; Seeberg, *Hist. of Doc.*, Bk. I. Pt. I. ch. iii. *passim;* Hefele, *Councils*, Vol. I. pp. 231–239.

[4] On variations of ante-Nicene statements, see J. H. Newman, *Arians*, ch. ii. § 4.

a letter, were used interchangeably in some cases, without adequate care to distinguish their implications. These terms were ἀγένητος, which means unoriginate and eternal, and ἀγέννητος, which signifies not generate. It was said that the Logos is ἀγέννητος, as if He were not begotten of the Father, the meaning really being that He is ἀγένητος, or eternal and uncreate. It was also said that the Father alone is ἀγένητος, implying that the Son is not eternal; but the meaning was that He alone is ἀγέννητος, unbegotten. Not until the Arian controversy was this confusion of terms brought to an end. The Son was then said to be γέννητος, begotten; and not γένητος, created.[1]

Theophilus borrowed the distinction of the Stoics and of Philo between the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and the λόγος προφορικός to set forth the eternal existence of the Word in the Father before creation, on the one hand, and His going forth to create the world, on the other hand.[2] The distinction was a true one, but was pressed in a manner which seemed to imply that

[1] St. Athan., *c. Arian.*, I. 30; St. John Dam., *Orth. Fid.*, I. 8; J. H. Newman, *op. cit.*, ch. ii. § 4. 1; *Select Treatises of St. Athan.*, Vol. II. *s. vv.* "Ἀγέννητον"; "Γενητὸν, Γεννητόν"; Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 121, 122; Suicer, *Thesaurus*, *s. vv.* "ἀγέννητος καὶ ἀγένητος;" "γενητὸς καὶ γεννητός;" *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2d Series, Vol. V. p. 100, note.

[2] *Ad. Autol.*, ii. 10, 22. Cf. St. Athan., *c. Arian.*, I. 7, 33; *Expos. Fid.*, c. 1; J. H. Newman, *Select Treatises of St. Athan.*, Vol. II. pp. 340–342; *Arians*, ch. ii. § 4. 5; C. A. Swainson, in *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. v.* "Logos, the Word," pp. 735, 736; Suicer, *s. v.* "Λόγος"; Dorner, *op. cit.*, Div. I. Vol. II. p. 436. Cf. pp. 218, 219, below.

the Logos had no distinct personal subsistence before His going forth. The term γέννησις, generation, was used to describe this going forth, and the title Son was by some writers applied to the Logos only after this γέννησις. Such methods of description were liable to be understood as involving a denial of the Son's eternal existence. The Gnostics had regarded the Logos and the Only-begotten as separate beings. Justin Martyr described the Son as begotten by the will of God. This phraseology might mean, in view of the use of γέννησις just defined, that He came into the world by the will of the Father. The real meaning was probably a denial that God can be under external necessity. Even the heathen Plotinus declared that God's will is identical with His nature. Yet such language lent itself to Arian application. Arius put this dilemma: If the generation was not voluntary, the Father was under external limitation in begetting His Son; if voluntary, the Son is a creature. The answer is that the generation of the Son springs neither from external necessity nor from volition, but from the divine essence itself. It is the Father's nature to beget His Son. The generation is spontaneous, but essential rather than voluntary.[1]

[1] Cf. pp. 218, 219, 224, below. The dilemma offered by Arius was answered more or less directly by St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, III. 3 *et. seq*; *de Decret. Nic. Syn.;* St. Gregory Nyss., *c. Eunom.*, viii. 2; ix. 2; St. Gregory Naz., *Theol. Orat.*, III. 3 *et seq.;* St. Ambrose, *de Fide*, iv. 9; St. Cyril Alex., *de Trin.*, ii. p. 56. See also J. H. Newman, *Arians*, ch. ii. § 4. 4; and App., note 2, pp. 416–422.

On the ante-Nicene passages which seem to teach a temporal

While it is impossible to justify all the phrases which these early writers employed, the general soundness of their position and intention is apparent in their writings, considered at large. Athenagoras, St. Irenaeus, and Clement of Alexandria[1] clearly set forth the co-eternal existence of the Logos with the Father, and refused to make any separation between the Logos, the Son, and Jesus Christ.[2] St. Irenaeus repudiated the notion that the Logos is merely the eternal world-idea; and clearly distinguished the two senses of the word "generation," as applied respectively to the eternal fact upon which the distinction between the Father and the Son is based and to His going forth into the world. Origen did a great deal to complete the orthodox theology of the Logos, but his work belongs to the third century.

generation of the Word, on the eve of creation, see a valuable note in *Nicene and Post-Nic. Fathers*, 2d Series, Vol. IV. pp. 343–347.

[1] Clement avowedly employed figurative language in order to protect Christian mysteries from desecration, and inadequate allowance for this has caused mistakes in interpreting his language. His method was a branch of the *disciplina arcani* or guarded method of teaching catechumens. See J. H. Newman, *Arians*, ch. i. § 3; *Cath. Encyc.*, *s.v.* "Discipline of the Secret"; A. W. Haddan, in *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*," *s.v.* "Disciplina Arcani."

[2] The scriptural evidence that they are one and the same Person is at a later date summarized by St. Athanasius, *c. Arian*, iv. 15 *et seq.* He refutes three errors: (*a*) that only the Man is Son; (*b*) that the Word and the Man together constitute the Son; (*c*) that the Word became Son by the Incarnation.

Among other clear statements on the Person of Christ in these writers, see St. Iren., *Adv. Haer.*, III. ix; x. 2; xvi. 7; xix. 2; Clem. Alex., *Exhort.*, 10 (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*, p. 202, 2d col.).

§ 4. The first half of this century saw the monarchian controversy, and a very considerable development of trinitarian terminology. This controversy arose from a desire to vindicate the Christian doctrine of divine unity and sovereignty as against the gnostic scheme of intermediate beings between God and His world. St. Irenaeus wrote a treatise to show that the divine monarchy, or sole rule of one God, does not involve a divine responsibility for evil.[1] This monarchia became at once an article of orthodoxy and a cause of speculative difficulty. The question obtruded itself, How can the doctrine of Christ's divinity be maintained without contradicting the primary truth of divine unity? At this stage of theological speculation, the impossibility of reconciling these two beliefs was regarded by many as self-evident; and the monarchia of God was rightly reckoned to be absolutely fundamental to the Christian position.

Attempts to grapple with this difficulty soon led to two opposite forms of heresy — psilanthropism and Sabellianism. The former error was maintained by two parties of the name Theodotus at the close of the second, and in the early years of the third, century. It was also supported by Artemon; and at a later date by Paul of Samosata, who became Bishop of Antioch.[2] These men agreed in asserting that only

[1] *On the Monarchia*, or on the truth that God is not the Author of evil, addressed to Florinus. The work is not extant, but is mentioned by Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.*, v. 20.

[2] On Paul of Samosata, see § 9, below.

Certain earlier heretics are mentioned — the alogi — who re-

one person can be God, and that Christ was not divine, but a man to whom was imparted superhuman endowments.[1] Such a position, as was proved by *The Little Labyrinth*, an anonymous treatise perhaps written by Hippolytus, was directly opposed to the traditional faith of the Church, and constituted a revolutionary innovation. It could not maintain itself in the Church at large, although the sophistic skill of Paul of Samosata well-nigh baffled his orthodox opponents.

§ 5. But, it often happens in the history of doctrine that the first efforts to overthrow heterodox teaching result in equally dangerous errors of a reactionary type. It was so at this crisis. Praxeas, a highly estimated opponent of Montanist vagaries, hastily accepting the assumption of the psilanthropists that there can be but one person in God, but insisting in opposition to them that Christ is divine, seemed to imply that He who suffered on the cross was no other Person than God the Father — patripassianism.

jected St. John's Gospel. Their connection with the monarchian controversy is disputable. See Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 98; *Cath. Encyc.*, *s. v.* "Alogi"; Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, Vol. III. pp. 14–19; Geo. Fisher, *Hist. of Christ. Doc.*, p. 100.

[1] On the monarchian controversy and psilanthropism (ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος, mere man), see Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, ch. vii, esp. pp. 98–102; Harnack, *op. cit.*, Vol. III. pp. 1–118; and in Schaff-Herzog, *Encyc.*, *s. v.* "Monarchianism"; R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. I. pp. 225 *et seq.*; Suicer, *Thesaurus*, *s. v.* μοναρχία; *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. v.* "Trinity, the Holy," pp. 1047, 1048; Dorner, *Person of Christ*, Div. I. Vol. II. pp. 6–15, 47–49; *Nicene and Post-Nic. Fathers*, Vol. IV. pp. xxiii *et seq.*

Whether he was really responsible for patripassianism or not, Noetus plainly avowed the heresy,[1] which was developed by Sabellius into a full-fledged modalistic view of the Trinity. According to him God is but one Person, who however manifests Himself in three economic relations or aspects, respectively as Father, as Son, and as Holy Spirit. He was willing to speak of three πρόσωπα (the Greek equivalent of *personae*) in God, but in the emasculated sense of *dramatis personae*, or passing rôles of manifestation.[2] This use of πρόσωπον served to discredit the term in orthodox Eastern theology.[3]

§ 6. Modalism was brought to birth in Rome, and is thought to have determined the views of more than one Pope. But this could not continue long, and the African Tertullian, writing against Praxeas, developed a Latin terminology which went far to determine the lines of subsequent thought in the West concerning the Trinity.[4] His point of view

[1] On the positions of Praxeas and Noetus, see Harnack, *op. cit.*, Vol. III. pp. 20–30; Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 102–107; *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. vv.* "Noetus"; "Praxeas"; "Hippolytus Romanus" (by Geo. Salmon); Dorner, *Person of Christ*, Div. I. Vol. II. pp. 15–46, 49–104. It was Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.*, 29, who punctuated the patripassian significance of Praxeas' error.

[2] On Sabellianism, see J. H. Newman, *Arians*, ch. i. § 5; R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. I. pp. 233–237; *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s.vv.* "Sabellianism"; "Sabellius"; Harnack, *op. cit.*, Vol. III. pp. 81–118; Dorner, *op. cit.*, Div. I. Vol. II. pp. 150–170; Hagenbach, *op. cit.*, § 88.

[3] See § 7, below.

[4] Of chief importance *ad rem* is his *adversus Praxean*. On his theological position, see Hagenbach, *op. cit.*, §§ 26(8), 42(9); Bethune-

was juristic. Substance, *substantia*, meant property capable of being jointly possessed by several persons, *personae*, or parties having rights. Now when the term substance is applied to God it signifies divinity and all that belongs to divine existence. Whatever problems may be raised by the supposition, no necessary contradiction is involved in believing that this divine substance can be the common property of three Persons, who possess it on equal terms, although in diverse manners. He also applied this mode of conceiving substance and person to the Incarnation. Two substances, in his use of the term, can be regarded as possessed by one person without any contradiction of ideas being involved.

Tertullian could not, of course, explain how three persons can possess one substance in God, but he accomplished an exceedingly important task for Latin theology. That is, he successfully appropriated the terms of his age for a definition of the antithetic truths of divine unity and threefold divine personality which was not justly liable to the charge of either sacrificing one truth in the interests of the other, or of being self-contradictory. The influence of modalistic monarchianism rapidly declined in Rome, and the chief terms which Tertullian employed have retained their place in Western theology to this day.

Tertullian did not forget, in insisting upon the co-

Baker, *op. cit.*, ch. x; Seeberg, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 125–127; B. B. Warfield, *Princeton Review*, April, 1906, 3d Art.; Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. I. pp. 254–263 (unduly critical).

equality of the divine Persons, to find place in his definitions for the principle of subordination in the Trinity. The Father is first in order, *gradus*, because the other Persons are from Him; the Son second, because Son; the Holy Spirit third, because He is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. This subordination is purely one of eternal origin and economy, and is saved from any implication of inequality between the Persons by the assertion of Their unity of ~~substance~~.[1] Novatian's treatise on the Trinity,[2] produced in the next generation, adopted and crystallized Tertullian's terminology.

§ 7. The Greek theologians were unable to fix trinitarian terms so quickly and summarily. Their speculations were more elaborate, and the terms which were in use were more subtle and more open to diverse interpretations. Ultimately, however, the terms οὐσία and ὑπόστασις became the technical equivalents in Greek theology of *substantia* and *persona* in the West. But neither term was at first free from ambiguity. Οὐσία was sometimes used to connote an individual person, and in that sense there were said to be three οὐσίαι in God. Ὑπόστασις came into use as a substitute for πρόσωπον. This last term had become discredited because of the facility

[1] We do not deny that, as might be expected at such a stage in theological development, he uses expressions which, if they occurred in a less orthodox context, would rightly be regarded as showing unsoundness.

[2] A critical edition has been issued by W. Yorke Fausset, 1909.

with which it was utilized in setting forth Sabellian ideas. It had become equivalent to *dramatis persona* and failed to exhibit the eternal and substantial reality of the distinctions in the Godhead.[1] But the new term was also liable to misconstruction. It was translated into Latin by *substantia*, and the assertion that there are three divine hypostases seemed equivalent to dividing the substance of God, that is, to tritheism.[2] It was Origen who first tried to distinguish between ὑπόστασις and οὐσία, but the terms continued to be used interchangeably, and such usage is discoverable in the Nicene anathema.[3] At the Synod of Alexandria, in 362 A.D., the two uses of the term ὑπόστασις were formally distinguished and mutual misapprehensions were removed.[4] The

[1] It meant originally face, guise, mask. Theophilus, *ad Autol.*, ii. 22, says that the Word, assuming the person (πρόσωπον) of the Father, went in the person of God and conversed with Adam. See Suicer, *Thesaurus*, *s. v.* πρόσωπον; Waterland, *Second Vindication*, pp. 540–2; Bethune-Baker. *op. cit.*, pp. 233–235; Dorner, *Christ. Doc.*, Vol. I. p. 379, note.

[2] Incautious Westerns were misled accordingly into speaking of three *substantiae*, meaning three hypostases, in the Godhead. Their meaning was sound, but their terminology could not be accepted.

[3] Those were anathematized who said that the Son was not from the Father's hypostasis or essence, ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίας. See Excursus in *Nicene and Post-Nic. Fathers*, 2d Series, Vol. IV. pp. 77–82; Hefele, *Hist. of Councils*, Vol. I. p. 295.

[4] W. Bright, *Age of the Fathers*, Vol. I. pp. 323–328; Hefele, *op. cit.*, pp. 276–278; *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, Vol. IV. pp. 1051, 1052; but espec. *Tomus ad Antiochenos*, § 6, sent by the Synod (transl. in *Nicene and Post-Nic.* Fathers, 2d Series, Vol. IV. pp. 484, 485).

Cappadocian theologians did much to crystallize the term in the sense of person, and the other use disappeared from orthodox terminology.[1] Henceforth μία οὐσία καὶ τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις became the recognized phrase; and was equivalent to one *substantia* and three *personae*.[2]

The terms ὑπόστασις and *persona* are not etymologically equivalent; and, when combined, express two opposite aspects of personality as ascribed to the three divine Persons. Ὑπόστασις, by reason of its etymology, served to emphasize the substantial and eternal reality of personal distinctions in the Godhead; while *persona*, for the same reason, bore witness to the truth in Sabellianism, that the divine Persons are not separate beings but modes of subsistence of one indivisible Being.[3] As separately employed in theology, however, the two terms are practically equivalent; and both symbolize the

[1] St. Basil's *Epis.* xxxviii (cf. *Epis.* ccxxxvi. 6) is classic. St. Gregory Naz., in *Orat.* xxi. 35, says, "We use in an orthodox sense the terms one essence and three hypostases, the one to denote the nature of the Godhead, the other the properties of the three. The Italians mean the same, but, owing to the scantiness of their vocabulary, and its poverty of terms, they are unable to distinguish between essence and hypostasis, and therefore introduce the term persons to avoid being understood to assert three essences."

[2] On the whole development, see Petavius, *de Trin.*, Lib. IV. capp. 4, 7; Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 235–238; and *Texts and Studies*, Vol. VII. No. 1. pp. 74–81; R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. pp. 254–259; Suicer, "*Thesaurus*, *s. vv.* "οὐσία"; "ὑπόστασις."

[3] The modern connotation of the term person — separate individuality — is not to be read into its theological use.

three co-eternal "somewhats" or egos who subsist in, and possess, the divine οὐσία or *substantia*.[1]

§ 8. Origen must be regarded as altogether the most brilliant and many-sided theologian of ante-Nicene days; and although he ventilated a number of speculative opinions that orthodox thought has condemned, the work to which he gave his remarkable powers was to fortify the traditional faith of the Church, and to vindicate its harmony with sound philosophy.[2] His belief in the co-eternal and co-equal Godhead of the divine Persons, and his freedom from any tendency to lose sight of their mutual distinction, cannot reasonably be denied. His most notable work was to define traditional and New Testament doctrine as to the generation of the Son, and as to what is called subordination. His language on subordination was used at a later date in support of Arianism, but not rightly.

Teaching that the generation of the Son is "like an act of His will proceeding from the mind," he will not admit that the Father could ever have lacked the Son. The act of generation is in this case "as eternal

[1] The subject of personality is given systematic treatment in ch. vi. below.

[2] On Origen's trinitarian position, see Bethune-Baker, *Early Hist. of Doc.*, pp. 147–154; R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. I. pp. 238–246; C. Bigg, *Christ. Platonists*, pp. 162–188; Harnack, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. pp. 352–361; *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. vv.* "Origenes"; "Trinity," pp. 1048, 1049; Geo. Fisher, *op. cit.*, pp. 104–114; Origen's *de Principiis* has primary importance in considering his position. His substantial orthodoxy was defended by Bishop Bull and Dr. Waterland. See the latter's *Defence of Some Queries*, Qu. xii, xvii.

and everlasting as the brilliancy which is produced from the sun . . . For it is not . . . that He is made a Son by any outward act, but by His own nature." [1] "Moreover, nothing in the Trinity can be called greater or less, since the fountain of divinity alone contains all things by His Word and reason, and by the Spirit of His mouth sanctifies, . . . there is no difference in the Trinity, but that which is called the gift of the Spirit is made known through the Son, and operated by God the Father." [2] In brief, the generation of the Son is an eternal, continuing fact, which transcends temporal relations and definitions. It also transcends physical analogies, for it makes no division of the Father's essence, "but what belongs to the nature of Deity is common to the Father and the Son." [3] "As an act of will proceeds from the understanding, and neither cuts off any part nor is separated or divided from it, so after some such fashion is the Father to be supposed as having begotten the Son." [4] It is perfectly clear that in using this figure He does not forget that the Son is a distinct hypostasis, never to be confused with the hypostasis of the Father. It is obvious that Origen's position clears up the difficulties attendant upon the various uses of the term γέννησις.[5] When that word is applied to the Son's derivation of the Godhead from

[1] *De Princ.* I. ii. Cf. Geo. Fisher, *op. cit.*, p. 108.
[2] *De Princ.*, I. iii. 7.
[3] *Op. cit.*, I. i. 8.
[4] *Op. cit.*, I. ii. 6.
[5] See p. 61, above.

the Father it cannot be described as occurring in time. When however, it is used to signify either the Son's going forth to create, or His becoming Son of Man, or His resurrection and exaltation, it may be said to occur in time; but such language, and the inferences properly made from it, may not be taken to determine the Son's temporal origin and creaturely rank in being.

Side by side with his clear assertion of the co-eternity and co-equality of the divine Persons occurs Origen's subordinationist doctrine, based upon our Lord's words, "The Father is greater than I."[1] But there is no real inconsistency in his position on this subject. He does not say that the Father is higher in essence than the Son,—quite the contrary.[2] The points maintained are, first, that whereas the Father is God as from none, the Son is God as begotten. The Godhead is the same, but the manner of the Son's possession of it is derivative, and this relation in procession between the divine Persons requires us to reckon the Father first, the Son second, and the Holy Spirit third. Secondly, he shows, in connection with this doctrine of the eternal order of the Persons, that in their economic operations in

[1] St. John xiv. 28. His position is defended by Bishop Bull, *Defence of the Nicene Faith*, Bk. IV. ch. ii. § 6.

[2] He denies, *op. cit.*, I. iii. 7, 8, that anything in the Trinity is essentially greater or less. But each Person has His economy of nature, reason, and grace, all working together. Hagenbach, *Hist. of Doc.*, § 46(4), fails to understand his real position, and other modern writers as well.

the world, although all the Persons work in unity, the relation of the Son and of the Holy Spirit becomes ministerial and subordinate to the Father's will. In brief, although the Father is not higher in essence than the Son, He is, so to speak, the fountain of Godhead to the Son and the Holy Spirit; and both in the eternal order of Persons and in their economic manifestation, He comes first in a true conception of the Trinity.[1]

The aspects of trinitarian doctrine which Origen combined in his definitions are manifold, and in certain particulars sharply antithetic. His success in formulating them together without self-contradiction appears marvellous when we consider the confused state of terminology in his time and the lack of theological precedents to follow. It is not surprising, therefore, that the admirers of his genius often failed to grasp his antithetic propositions in their unity. A tendency appeared to emphasize his subordinationist teaching, — as against the Sabellian confusion of Persons — without keeping in mind the counterbalancing considerations which Origen employed to protect his position from becoming one-sided and contrary to the traditional faith. The goal of this tendency proved to be Arianism, which is a fragment of Origen's doctrine — isolated, caricatured, and converted into heresy; and the development of Arianism took place in the School of Antioch. This school was characterized by its rationalism and over-dependence upon Aristotelic logic.

[1] On the doctrine of subordination, see ch. vii. § 8, below.

The Alexandrian School,[1] on the other hand, was more tenacious of traditional doctrine, and succeeded in preserving the doctrine of subordination without losing hold on the truth that the divine Persons are essentially co-equal. But one of Origen's pupils, Dionysius the Great, patriarch of Alexandria, appears to have urged the doctrine of subordination against Sabellianism in terms which laid him open to the charge of reducing the Son to a creaturely level. Complaints were made at Rome, and Pope Dionysius invited his namesake to explain. Satisfactory explanation was given and the Alexandrian acknowledged that the Son is ὁμοούσιος, of the same essence, with the Father.[2]

§ 9. This brings us to the famous Synod of Antioch, in 268 or 269 A.D., at which the adoptianist heresiarch Paul of Samosata was deposed.[3] Paul seems to have combined psilanthropism and Sabellianism. Skilful in argument, he was with difficulty brought to bay.

[1] On the school of Antioch, see J. H. Newman, *Arians*, chh. i, ii; J. H. Srawley, in Hastings, *Encyc. of Religion*, *s.v.* "Antiochene Theology." On the Alexandrian school, see J. H. Newman, *op. cit.*, ch. I. §§ iii–v; Hastings, *op. cit.*, *s.v.* "Alexandrian Theology," by W. R. Inge; Smith and Cheetham, *Dic. of Christ. Antiq.*, *s.v.* "Alexandria, Catechetical School of."

[2] St. Athanasius quotes both Dionysii in *de Decretis*, vi. 25, 26, and defends Dionysius of Alexandria, in *de Sententia Dionysii*. On the controversy, see Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 234–236; Ottley, *op. cit.*, Vol I., pp. 274–278; Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, ch. viii.

[3] On this controversy, see Edmund Venables, in *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. v.* "Paulus of Samosata"; Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 118–126; Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 100–102, 111–112; Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. I. pp. 280–290; Petavius, *de Trin.*, lib. I. ch. 6.

He employed the term ὁμοούσιος sophistically. If the Son is consubstantial with the Father, he argued, this must be because there is some prior substance, parts of which are possessed by the Father and the Son, neither Person being the fountain of the Godhead. On account of his misuse of it, the term was for the time rejected. That Paul did misuse it is perfectly clear. Creaturely substance is indeed divisible, and two separate creatures may be treated as ὁμοούσια. But the divine substance or essence is unique and indivisible, and to describe a person as ὁμοούσιος with God is to make Him a possessor of His unique and indivisible essence and co-equal with Him.[1]

Paul's deposition may be regarded as the last event of theological import in the ante-Nicene period. The seeds of Arianism were indeed subsequently planted at Antioch by Lucian, and a number of the disciples

[1] On the ὁμοούσιος at Antioch, see A. Robertson's Proleg. to the Works of St. Athan., in *Nicene and Post-Nic. Fathers*, 2d Series, Vol. IV. pp. xxxi, xxxii; J. H. Newman, *Arians*, ch. ii. § 4.3, pp. 184–196; Petavius, *op. cit.*, I. v. 3; Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 123, 124; Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 111, 112; Wordsworth, *Church Hist.*, Vol. I. pp. 399, 400. Cf. St. Athan., *de Synodis*, 46: "For they who deposed the Samosatene, took coessential in a bodily sense, because Paul had attempted sophistry and said, 'unless Christ has of man become God, it follows that He is coessential with the Father; and if so, of necessity there are three essences, one the previous essence, and the other two from it'; and therefore guarding against this they said with good reason, that Christ was not coessential." Cf. St. Basil, *c. Eunom.*, i. 19; *Epis.* lii; St. Hilary. *de Trin.*, iv. 4; Bull, *Defence of Nic. Faith*, II. i. 9–13.

of his school became Arian leaders,[1] but the whole subject of Arianism is best considered as pertaining to the Nicene period.

II. *The Nicene Period*

§ 10. The work achieved for trinitarian doctrine in the fourth century[2] was in line with that of St. Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Origen. It consisted in discriminating between the terms developed by the orthodox champions of the ante-Nicene period; and in giving ecclesiastical sanction and general currency to such of these terms as were suitable for permanent use in defining the content of traditional and New Testament doctrine. The effect of this was to fix the theological meanings of the terms employed, and to exclude from their Christian use the pagan and heretical connotations which had limited the success of ante-Nicene theologians and had deprived their language of finality for the Church at large. It was the Arian conflict which necessitated and precipitated the Nicene settlement.

[1] Newman, *Arians*, pp. 8, 403; A. Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. xxviii; Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, Vol. III. pp. 48, 49; Vol. IV. pp. 2–7; Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 110, 111; Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 237–239.

[2] On the development of trinitarian theology in the Nicene and post-Nicene period, see, in addition to the bibliography given in p. 53, note 2, above, St. Athanasius, historical writings and those against the Arians; W. Bright, *Age of the Fathers;* Fleury, *Church Hist.*, 3 vols., trans. by Newman; Percival, *Seven Ecum. Councils;* and the Introductions in the various vols. of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.*

Arianism [1] has been described above as "a fragment of Origen's doctrine — isolated, caricatured, and converted into heresy," by the application of syllogistic logic to the doctrine of sonship and subordination. The seed of this error, as was stated in the previous section, was planted and watered in the school at Antioch, of which Lucian was the recognized head. In that school the practice was to depend one-sidedly upon literal exegesis, the results of which were made premises of logic resulting in turn in conclusions which are contrary to the teaching of Scripture as more adequately interpreted. Arius was a presbyter of Alexandria, but had been trained in the school of Antioch. Among other Arian and semi-Arian disciples of the same school were Eusebius of Nicomedia, Leontius, Eudoxius, and Asterius.

The argument of Arius began with the fact that Christ is Son, and was based upon the major premise that a son must be later in time than his father. His syllogism was substantially as follows: *Major:* A

[1] On the Arian conflict, see in particular W. Bright, *Age of the Fathers*, Vol. I; A. Robertson, "Prolegomena" to the *Select Works and Letters* of St. Athanasius as above cited; J. H. Newman, *Arians of the Fourth Century; Select Treatises of St. Athanasius*, esp. the 2d vol. of notes; Petavius, *de Trin.*, I. 7–13; R. L. Ottley, *Incarnation*, Vol. I. pp. 299 *et seq.;* Vol. II. pp. 3–47; Harnack, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV; Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, ch. xii.; Dorner, *Person of Christ*, Div. I. Vol. II. pp. 227–331; Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vols. I, II; Gwatkin, *Arian Controversy; Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. vv.* "Arianism"; "Athanasius"; "Trinity," pp. 1050–1052; W. Barry, in *Cath. Ency.*, *s. v.* "Arianism"; F. J. Foakes-Jackson, in Hastings, *Encyc. of Religion*, *s. v.* "Arianism."

son must be later in time than his father; *Minor:* Christ is the Son of God the Father: *Conclusion:* He is later in time than the Father; so that there was a time when He was not, and He is a creature, ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐγένετο. The somewhat interchangeable use of ἀγένητος and ἀγέννητος which had previously prevailed was made the basis of a question; and the orthodox were asked how there could be a Son of God who was both γέννητος and ἀγέννητος, begotten and unbegotten.[1] The Scriptures were cited, with a literalism of interpretation which disregarded their general tenor. The several arguments, both rational and biblical, which were employed by the Arians are elsewhere discussed.[2] It is sufficient at this point to call attention to their more glaring fallacies, and to the essentially pagan significance of Arianism.

The first mistake of its promoters was their attempt to reduce a complex mystery to the simplicity of a completely intelligible logic. Truth cannot, of course, be accepted in terms that really violate logic, for logic describes necessary laws in the apprehension of truth. But when logic starts with inadequate and one-sided premises, its freedom from formal fallacy does not establish its conclusion.[3] The Arian premise that sonship involves temporal sequence is inade-

[1] Newman, *Arians*, pp. 201–234; Bright, *op. cit.*, pp. 72, 73. Cf. pp. 59, 60, above.

[2] See ch. v. §§ 2–5, 11, 12, below.

[3] See J. B. Mozley, *Development*, pp. 41–43.

quate, because valid only in relation to temporal sonship.[1] Arius professed to follow Origen, but if he had accepted Origen's doctrine of eternal generation, he would have perceived the material fallacy of his own logic—the falsity of its premise as applied to the sonship of an eternal Person. The Arians were sophistic in finding fault with the notion of a begotten unbegotten. A loose use of terms does not warrant argument, except to prepare the way for a more guarded terminology. St. Athanasius brought out the truth involved, and improved catholic terminology, by calling the Logos the eternal begotten, ἀγένητος καὶ γέννητος.[2]

Another example of Arian sophistry may well be noticed. It was urged that the Logos was either begotten by the Father's will, as certain ante-Nicene writers had said, or He was not. If He was, He was a creature; if He was not, the Father begat Him under compulsion. The truth is that neither alternative has to be accepted. An act which is involved in the nature of a being may be both necessary and free. The generation of the Son of God is necessary, because it pertains to the essential and eternal mode of divine existence. On the other hand, it is a spontaneous and free act of the Father, because will and essence are one in God. That which constitutes God cannot be regarded as an external constraint upon

[1] St. Athan., *c. Arian.*, II. xviii. 35. Cf. I. viii. 26, 28; St. Gregory Naz., *Theol. Orat.*, iii. 3; St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, vi. 1.

[2] *c. Arian.*, I. ix. Cf. St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, v. 4, 7, 8.

His will. In this, as in other matters, the Arians failed to grasp the whole of Origen's position.[1]

The mistake which vitiated every appeal to Scripture in behalf of Arianism was a reliance upon the proof-text method; that is, upon the use of isolated expressions, torn away from their context, and given an interpretation which cannot stand the test of a comprehensive and inductive investigation into the teaching of Scripture at large.

The essentially pagan nature of Arianism became increasingly apparent as time went by. The Arians did not undertake to assail the worship of Christ, and yet they refused to acknowledge His possession of the fulness of the indivisible Godhead. Christ is either the supreme God or a mere creature. To call Him a super-angelic being, the first and highest of creatures, the agent through whom God made other creatures, did not, and could not, conceal the polytheistic meaning of Arian worship. According to the Arian hypothesis He was such a god as the pagans worshipped, whom to worship was to violate the first principle of monotheistic doctrine, that the Almighty will not share His glory with another.[2] The very

[1] See pp. 61, 70–72, above, esp. note 1, on p. 61, where refs. are given.

[2] St. Athanasius, *Epis. ad Aegyp.*, 13, says, "And the Apostle blames the Gentiles, because they worship the creatures. . . . But if these men say that the Lord is a creature, and worship Him as a creature, how do they differ from the Gentiles?" Cf. *c. Arian*, iii. 16. St. Gregory Naz., *Theol. Orat.*, v. 13, says, "What right have you who worship the Son, even though you have revolted from the

existence of Christianity was at stake in the Arian controversy, and in the maintenance of trinitarian doctrine.[1]

§ 11. The issue was met at the Council of Nicea,[2] by inserting a few words, including the term ὁμοούσιος, in one of the Eastern creeds, and by giving ecumenical authority to this creed in its revised form. That is, the Son was declared to be of one essence with the Father, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί, *consubstantialem Patri*. Those who brought about the adoption of ὁμοούσιος had come to see that Paul of Samosata had used the term sophistically; and that, as applied to divine Persons, it is not open to the interpretation which he placed upon it.[3] Correctly understood, the Nicene use of it signifies that the indivisible essence of God is equally and fully possessed by the Father

Spirit, to call us tritheists? Are not you ditheists?" Cf. St. Hilary, *de Trin.*, viii. 28. The point was often made. See Waterland, *Second Vindication*, Qy. xvi, xvii.

[1] Cf. W. Bright, *op. cit.*, pp. 73, 74; J. Orr, *Christ. View of God*, pp. 390, 391; Martensen, *Christ. Dogma*, § 53; A. Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. xxix–xxx; Ottley, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 309, 310; Harnack, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV. pp. 39–43.

[2] On the proceedings at Nicea, see Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 165–170; Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 262–298; W. Bright, *op. cit.*, pp. 85–98; E. S. Ffoulkes, in *Dic. of Christ. Antiq.*, *s.v.* "Nicea, Councils of (1)." The documents are transl. in Percival, *Seven Ecum. Councils*. St. Athanasius gives an account in *De Decretis* (Cf. *Ad. Afros*, 5), which is of primary importance; and Eusebius of Cæsarea gives his version in *Epistola Eusebii*, addressed to his people after the Council broke up (transl. in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2d Series, Vol. IV. pp. 74–76).

[3] See § 9, above, where refs. are given.

and the Son.[1] The Son is, therefore, not a second divine being, but one of three personal Subjects of the unique, indivisible, and incommunicable Godhead.

We do not need to think that the Church for a time fell away from the true doctrine of the Trinity in order to explain the triumphs of the Arian party during the fifty years which followed the adjournment of the Council of Nicea. Imperial support of the Arians, combined with much episcopal time-serving, had a good deal to do with delaying the final triumph of the defenders of the Nicene Council. Such time-serving, inconsistent though it be with earnest contention for the faith, is not by itself a proof of either apostasy or heresy. The chief champion of orthodoxy of that age, St. Athanasius, regarded many of his episcopal opponents as misled rather than as heretical.

Other causes helped to delay the full victory of the orthodox cause. The decision at Nicea represented a more enlightened perception of the issues at stake

[1] On the ὁμοούσιος, see Bishop Bull, *Defence of Nic. Faith*, Bk. II, esp. ch. i; Suicer, *Thesaurus*, *q. v.*; Newman, *Arians*, II. iv. 3; III. i. 3; *Select Treatises*, Vol. II. pp. 438–442; Liddon, *Divinity of Our Lord*, pp. 438–447; Bright, *op. cit.*, pp. 91–92; Harnack, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV. ch. i, esp. pp. 33–36; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, § 97; Bethune-Baker, in *Texts and Studies*, Vol. IV. No. 1; *Journal of Theol. Studies*, Jan., 1902, pp. 291–294 (Review of the last mentioned); same journal, Jan. and Oct., 1901 ("Hist. of the Theol. Term Substance," by T. B. Strong); A. Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. xxx–xxxiii (with other references); Ottley, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 315–320; Excursus in *Nicene and Post-Nic. Fathers*, 2d Series, Vol. IV. pp. 77–82.

than the majority of the Bishops in attendance had attained.[1] The Arian leaders were unscrupulous, and were able for some time to conceal the full gravity of their position by subscribing to terms which were apparently orthodox, but which were really ambiguous and capable of being accepted with heretical interpretations. So long as the significance of Arianism was not clearly perceived, the insistence upon ὁμοούσιος — a non-Scriptural term[2] which had been abandoned by the orthodox in a previous generation[3] — seemed like an unjustifiable disturbance of the peace of the Church, and was resented. This resentment was intensified by a somewhat widespread impression that to describe the Son as ὁμοούσιος τῷ πατρί involved a Sabellian confusion of Persons.[4] The distinction between the meanings of the terms οὐσία and ὑπόστασις had not yet become clarified and fixed in general interpretation and use; and, so long as this was the case, the term ὁμοούσιος was

[1] The majority were in fact surprised into a decision the necessity for which they did not perceive. They naturally came to regard the triumphant Athanasians as an aggressive and troublesome faction.

[2] Answered by St. Athanasius, in *de Decretis*, 18–20, and elsewhere.

[3] Answered in *de Synodis*, 43–46. Cf. ch. iii. § 9, above.

[4] Marcellus seems to have fallen into Sabellianism, and his error was exploited more boldly by Photinus. See Bright, *op. cit.*, pp. 156–158, 193, 194; Bethune-Baker, *Hist. of Doc.*, pp. 190–192; Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. pp. 29–32. St. Athanasius was not open to such suspicion. St. Basil, *Epis.*, lii. 3, shows that to be consubstantial *with* implies comparison with another person.

liable thus to be misunderstood.[1] It took many years of experience with Arian devices for the Oriental Bishops at large to acquire a realizing sense of the issues at stake, and to learn that the ὁμοούσιος afforded the only test of sound trinitarian doctrine which was then available. In the meantime, it is to be remembered, the faithful continued sincerely to worship Christ as very God. *Athanasius contra mundum* never really became *Athanasius contra ecclesiam.*[2]

During the conflict various substitutes for ὁμοούσιος were suggested. The most openly Arian were ἑτερούσιος and ἀνόμοιον. Ἑτερούσιος, of another essence, was used by Aetius and Eudoxius; and ἀνόμοιον, unlike, by Eunomius, a follower of Aetius. Eusebius of Cæsarea and the semi-Arian party preferred either ὁμοιούσιος, of like essence, or κατ' οὐσίαν ὅμοιον, like in essence, or ὅμοιον, like.[3] All these last were susceptible of orthodox interpretations; but were accepted by Arian leaders in unsound senses, based sophistically upon the scriptural statement that man is made in the image of God and after His likeness.

[1] The explanations made at the Council of Alexandria, in 362 A.D., clarified the air. Cf. p. 68, above, where refs. are given. See also Newman, *Arians*, App. note iv.

[2] On this subject, see Newman, *Tracts Theol. and Eccles.*, pp. 149–163; Bishop Bull, *op. cit.*, conclus (Vol. II. pp. 661–668). St. Cyril Jerus., *Catechetical Lectures*, exhibit the orthodoxy of one who systematically avoided the term, ὁμοούσιος. Cf. esp. passages in iv. 8; vi. 6; vii. 4; x. 6; xi. 4, 5, 16, 20; xvi. 4.

[3] Bright describes the various forms of Arianism, *op. cit.*, pp. 246–252.

The likeness between God and man, however, is not generic but relative and metaphorical. It was a generally accepted postulate that God is absolutely unique in essence, so that every creature is ἑτερούσιος τῷ Πατρί. Those who honestly and intelligently faced the issue came to see that the unity of really divine Persons must be utterly different from that in which creatures can share; and also that no assertion of likeness is adequate to symbolize it, for it is not generic. The divine essence cannot be either divided or multiplied; and, if the Father and the Son are both really divine, their essence is numerically one and the same. The ὁμοούσιος clearly set forth this truth; whereas the rival terms, in particular ὁμοιούσιος, could be taken to signify a merely generic unity, such as might be ascribed to a group of pagan gods.

St. Athanasius realized this.[1] But at the same time he perceived that many Bishops of the semi-Arian party did not realize it; and that their rejection of ὁμοούσιος was based upon misapprehension, and had no heterodox motive. Accordingly, while not ceasing to defend the decision of Nicea, in the earlier stages of the controversy he habitually resorted to other terms and paraphrases in defining the doctrine which it protects — *e.g.* ὅμοιος κατὰ πάντα, ὅμοιος κατ᾽ οὐσίαν

[1] The contention that St. Athanasius did not mean to *identify* the essence of the Father and of the Son has been discredited. See Harnack, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV. pp. 33–36. Cf. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, p. 153; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, Vol. I. pp. 290–292.

ὁμοφυής, etc.[1] In his use of them, these terms were not justly liable to a minimizing construction. The explanations made at the Council of Alexandria in 362 A.D. helped to clear the air, and to secure general currency of the formula, *μία οὐσια ἐν τρισὶν ὑποστάσεσιν*.[2] If there is but one οὐσία in the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are obviously ὁμοούσιοι.

§ 12. If the term ὁμοούσιος was not justly liable to the objection that it connoted a Sabellian confusion of Persons, its adoption did serve to recover and guard the doctrine of which Sabellianism was a one-sided caricature—the doctrine which is signified by the terms περιχώρησις, *circumcessio*, and coinherence.[3] St. Athanasius clearly formulated this truth.[4] He was not, however, a reactionary. If Arianism had caricatured Origen's doctrine of subordination as against Sabellianism, he did not for that reason, in the interests of the ὁμοούσιος, surrender the doctrine thus caricatured.[5] What he did was to avoid caricatures in both directions, and to combine in just proportions the antithetic mysteries which are guarded

[1] Newman, *Select Treatises*, Vol. II. pp. 141, 142, says that he used ὁμοούσιος but once in his *Orations Against the Arians* — i. 9.

[2] Ottley, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. pp. 42, 43. The Cappadocian writers did the most to crystallize the distinction between οὐσία and ὑπόστασις and to complete the vindication of ὁμοούσιος. See pp. 179–180, below.

[3] On Circumcession, see ch. vii. § 10, below.

[4] *E.g.* in *c. Arian.*, II. xviii. 33, 41; III. xxiii. He did not, of course, discover it, for it is clearly implied in earlier writers. Instances are given by Bishop Bull, *op. cit.*, Bk. IV. ch. iv. § 9.

[5] Cf. *c. Arian.*, III. 35, 36.

by the terminology of subordination and coinherence. It is a non-realization of this which has caused more than one failure of modern writers to do justice to his position.[1]

The doctrine of coinherence is that the divine Persons, by reason of their being the Subjects of one indivisible essence, exist in each other. The Persons are eternally distinct; but they are inseparable, and the undivided Trinity is in each, for each possesses the fulness of the one Godhead. As St. Augustine says, "In corporeal things, one thing alone is not as much as three together, and two are something more than one; but in that highest Trinity one is as much as the Three together, nor are Two anything more than One. And they are infinite in themselves. So both each are in each, and all in each, and each in all, and all in all, and all are one." [2]

Unhappily the balance of St. Athanasius has not always been preserved; and although both St. Hilary of Poitiers [3] and St. Augustine [4] expressly acknowl-

[1] Harnack regards his position as self-contradictory, and A. Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. xxxiii, barely escapes asserting the same thing. Symbolical terms of antithetic truths are not to be regarded as mutually contradictory unless pressed in more than their symbolical — that is, their theological — meaning. Their inadequacy does not prove their falsity.

[2] *De Trin.*, vi. 12. Cf. vii. 11; viii. 2.

[3] "The Father is greater because He is Father: but the Son, because He is Son, is not less. By the birth of the Son the Father is constituted greater: the nature that is His by birth does not suffer the Son to be less." *De Trin.*, ix. 56.

[4] Cf. *de Trin.*, ii. 2, 3; v. 15; *c. Maxim.*, ii. 3.

edge the *principatus* of the Father, or the doctrine of subordination, the fear of Arianism drove this truth into the background in Augustinian theology; and Western writers of subsequent ages have shown a tendency to neglect it.[1] Yet the position taken by St. Athanasius has never been really abandoned by catholic theology; and the two truths of subordination and coinherence, by their combination, complete and guard the doctrines of tri-personality and divine unity. The truths of divine mission — or the economic relationships of the Son to the Father, and of the Holy Spirit to the Father and the Son, in temporal manifestations and dispensations, — have been reckoned with and elaborated by later writers from this comprehensive standpoint.

§ 13. The centre of theological interest previous to this age had been the doctrine of Christ's Person. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit had received comparatively little separate attention.[2] Inasmuch as the

[1] It is however acknowledged by St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxxiii. 1; and by Petavius, *de Trin.*, II. 2, 15. The latter says, "The Father is said to be greater than the Son in so far as He is Son, or in so far as He is begotten; so that He is not called greater than Him in His being God, or according to nature and essence." This doctrine is considered in ch. vii. §§ 8, 9, below. Our own Bishop Bull and Dr. Waterland did full justice to the doctrine. Cf. Newman on "The Principatus of the Father," in *Tracts Theol. and Eccles.*, pp. 167 *et seq.;* W. Bright, *St. Leo on the Incarn.*, note 128.

[2] On the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in history, see H. B. Swete, *Early Hist. of the Doc. of the Holy Ghost;* and his art. in *Dic. of Christ. Biog.*, *s. v.* "Holy Ghost"; Harnack, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV. pp. 108–137; Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, ch. xiii; Petavius, *de Trin.*, Lib. I. cap. 14; Lib. II. cap. 6; C. Bigg, *Christ. Platonists*, pp. 70, 71, 171–174; Suicer,

whole doctrine of the Trinity is involved in a true Christology, it is not surprising that the controversy concerning Christ's Person, once begun, should for several generations have engaged the almost exclusive attention of theologians and apologists. But we are not to infer from this circumstance that the Church at any time failed to cherish a living faith in the Holy Spirit. There is abundant evidence to be found in ante-Nicene literature that His distinct personality and true Divinity were accepted doctrines, and determined the practical ideals of orthodox Christians.[1] Moreover we discover in early writings acknowledgments of the eternal procession of the Spirit, and of His relation to the Father and the Son in the divine Monarchy.[2] But these acknowledgments are usually incidental, and connected with expositions of Christological doctrine.

The Arian denial of Christ's true Godhead, and the arguments employed in support of this denial, logically involved a like rejection of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. According to St. Athanasius, Arius maintained that "the essences of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are separate in nature, and estranged, and disconnected, and alien, and without

Thesaurus, *s. v.* "πνεῦμα"; Ewd. Burton, *Testimonies of the Ante-Nicene Fathers . . . Trinity and . . . the Holy Ghost;* Hagenbach, *op. cit.*, §§ 44, 93; and the references on the *filioque* controversy given in the next section.

[1] See Ewd. Burton, *op. cit.*, for significant passages.

[2] See H. B. Swete, *Hist. of the Doctrine of the Process. of the Holy Spirit*, for instances.

participation in each other . . . 'utterly unlike from each other in essence and glory, unto infinity.'"[1] Even among the orthodox there appeared to be some unreadiness to assert in definite terms the personality and divinity of the Spirit. This was partly due to a fear of confusing and weakening their argument against the erroneous Christology of the Arians; but also to the lack of an accepted terminology in relation to the Holy Spirit.[2]

But the issue had soon to be met. The bald statements of Eunomius brought the Arian denial of the orthodox doctrine of the Holy Spirit into clear relief. The Spirit was declared to be inferior to the Son, and to have been created by Him. Among those Semi-Arians who were beginning to perceive the real meaning and value of the term ὁμοούσιος as applied to the Son there were some who had not sufficiently

[1] *c. Arian*, I. 6. Elsewhere, Epis. lxi. 5, *ad Maxim.*, he says that the Nicene decision is "enough to overthrow every heresy however impious, and especially that of the Arians which speaks against the Word of God, and as a logical consequence profanes His Holy Spirit."

[2] St. Basil, in his treatise, *de Spiritu Sancto*, refrains from calling the Spirit God, although the purport of his argument is to prove His true Godhead. The explanation is given by B. Jackson, in his Prolegomena to Vol. VIII of *Nicene and Post-Nic. Fathers*, p. xxiii, note.

St. Gregory Naz. exhibits the confused state of mind prevailing when he says, *Theol. Orat.*, v. 5, "Some of the wise men among us regard the Holy Spirit as an energy (ἐνέργεια), others think that He is a creature, some again that He is God Himself" [not distinct in Person from the Father], "and, lastly, there are some who do not know what opinion to adopt, from reverence, as they say, for the Sacred Scriptures, because they do not teach anything definite on this point."

thought out the implications of trinitarian doctrine to be able to perceive the necessity of a definite acknowledgment of the distinct personality and true divinity of the Holy Spirit, and of His consubstantiality with the Father and the Son. Under such circumstances arose what came to be called the Macedonian party, named after Macedonius of Constantinople. Its distinctive tenet was a denial of the divinity of the Holy Spirit.[1]

As early as 361 A.D. St. Athanasius dealt with this error in his *Letters to Serapion;* and the two Alexandrian Synods of 362[2] and 363 A.D. took a definite stand for the traditional faith. Several Councils held at Rome under Damasus took similar ground; and an orthodox Tome on the Holy Spirit, issued by this Pope, was subscribed to in 378 A.D. by 146 Bishops at Antioch.[3] Other Councils likewise affirmed the Divinity of the Holy Spirit, and the great Council of Constantinople, 381 A.D., held under the auspices of the Emperor Theodosius, gave a final condemnation of Macedonianism.[4] This Council received subsequent recognition as the second

[1] Hagenbach, *op. cit.*, § 93; Blunt, *Dic. of Sects*, *s v.* "Pneumatomachi"; Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 209–231; Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. pp. 280–281.

[2] Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. pp. 276–278; Newman, *Arians*, ch. v. § 1; Introd. to St. Athanasius' *Tomus ad Antioch.*, in *Nicene and Post-Nic. Fathers*, Vol. IV. pp. 481, 482.

[3] On these Synods and the *Tome* of Damasus, see Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 214–217; Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. pp. 287–289.

[4] On the Second Ecumenical Council, see Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. pp. 340 *et seq.;* Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 225–231.

Ecumenical Council of the Church. Among the writers who helped to complete the work of St. Athanasius in refuting Macedonianism, and in formulating the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, were Didymus of Alexandria,[1] St. Basil the Great,[2] Sts. Gregory of Nyssa [3] and of Nazianzus [4] and Epiphanius of Cyprus,[5] among the Easterns; and St. Ambrose of Milan [6] in the West.

As a result of the controversy an expansion of the article in the Nicene Creed on the Holy Spirit came into use, and was subsequently adopted by the Council of Chalcedon, in 451 A.D. The original Nicene phrase was very brief: Καὶ [πιστεύομεν] εἰς τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον. The expanded clause read: Καὶ [πιστεύομεν] εἰς τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον, Κύριον, καὶ Ζωοποιόν· τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον· τὸ σὺν Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ συνπροσκυνούμενον καὶ συνδοξαζόμενον· τὸ λαλῆσαν διὰ τῶν προφητῶν. This enlarged phraseology appears to have come from the Creed of Jerusalem, and may have been recited by St. Cyril of that See at the Council of Constantinople with the approval of his listeners. But that it was formally adopted by the Council has not been proved.[7]

§ 14. The Spirit is declared in the clause which

[1] *De Spiritu Sancto.*

[2] *De Spiritu Sancto.*

[3] *Adversus Macedonium.*

[4] Fifth *Theol. Orat.*

[5] *Ancoratus.*

[6] *De Spiritu.*

[7] F. J. A. Hort, *Two Dissertations;* Harnack, in Schaff-Herzog *Encyc.*, *s.v.* "Constantinopolitan Creed"; Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 188, 189, 214–217.

we are considering to proceed from the Father, but no mention is made of His procession from the Son.[1] This omission cannot be shown to signify a denial of the procession from the Son, and is explainable on other grounds. The Scriptures describe the Spirit as proceeding from the Father,[2] and do not use the same expression in describing His relation to the Son; but describe Him as receiving from the Son,[3] as the Spirit of the Son,[4] and as sent into the world by the Son.[5] We find several orthodox Eastern writers of the fourth century deducing from this teaching the conclusion which may be summed up in the phrase, "who proceedeth from the Father *through* the Son." Passages may be found which are approximately equivalent to the Western phrase, "who proceedeth from the Father *and* the Son."[6] But the very general desire to adhere as closely as practicable to scriptural phrases, combined with an existing tendency in the East to lay stress on the *principatus* of the

[1] On the whole *filioque* controversy, see H. B. Swete, *Hist. of the Doc. of the Process. of the Holy Spirit;* E. B. Pusey, *On the Clause 'And the Son';* Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, § 98; Petavius, *de Trin.*, Lib. VII; *Church Quarterly Review*, Jan., 1877, pp. 421–465. Cf. first note in the previous section.

[2] St. John xv. 26: *ὁ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται.*

[3] St. John xvi. 14, 15: *ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λαμβάνει.*

[4] Acts v. 9; Rom. viii. 9; Gal. iv. 6; Phil. i. 19; Pet. i. 11.

[5] St. John xv. 26. Cf. pp. 230–232, below.

[6] Patristic statements are given in their Greek and Latin originals by H. B. Swete, *op. cit.;* and by Dr. Pusey, *op. cit.*, in English. Cf. Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Christ. Dogma*, note 3, pp. 276–278, for a brief selection. A few of the more significant passages are quoted in ch. vii. § 7, below.

Father, sufficiently accounts for the omission from the Jerusalem Creed of any reference to the participation of the Son in the spiration of the Holy Ghost.

In the West there was less tendency to dwell upon the *principatus* of the Father, although the truth that there can be but one *principium* and procession of the Spirit was acknowledged by St. Ambrose [1] and St. Augustine.[2] The consequence was that the Spirit's procession from the Son was asserted along with that from the Father, no effort being made as a rule to distinguish the senses in which the Holy Spirit is said to proceed, on the one hand, from the Father, and, on the other hand, from the Son. This undiscriminating phraseology crept into the version of the Nicene Creed which was current in the West, and the interpolated phrase *filioque* appears in this Creed as received by the Council of Toledo in 589 A.D.[3]

[1] See passages given by H. B. Swete, *op. cit.*, pp. 119–122.

[2] As quoted in p. 234, note 1, below.

[3] The following events are to be noted in the subsequent history of the *filioque*.

(*a*) In 680 A.D. the English Council of Hatfield, presided over by Abp. Theodore (an Oriental by birth), affirmed the procession of the Spirit *ex Patre et Filio*. See H. B. Swete, *op. cit.*, pp. 187–192.

(*b*) The *filioque* was maintained in Gaul at the Council of Gentilly, A.D. 767; at Frankfort, 794 A.D.; at Friuli, 796 A.D.; and at Aix-la-Chapelle, 809 A.D. The then Pope, Leo III, while not objecting to the doctrine, denied its necessity, condemned its insertion into the Creed as uncanonical, and placed two silver shields in St. Peter's with the Nicene Creed in its uninterpolated form inscribed thereon. The Gallic Church continued to use the *filioque*, which also came into use in Rome about 200 years later. H. B. Swete, *op. cit.*, pp. 198, 199, 211–226.

The *filioque* controversy does not come within the scope of this treatise except in its theological bearings,

(*c*) As an incident of wider controversy with the See of Rome, Photius of Constantinople took issue in the middle of the 9th century on the *filioque*, and expressly denied any kind of eternal procession of the Spirit from the Son. Thus the controversy was given a theological as well as a canonical significance. Fully de-described in Neander, *Church Hist.*, Vol. IV.

(*d*) At the Council of Lyons, 1274 A.D., the Greeks accepted the language of Canon 1, "that the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son, *ex Patre et Filio;* not as from two principles, but as from one principle; not by two spirations, but by one, *unica*, spiration." This was dictated by political motives, and popular sentiment in the East quickly nullified their concession. Pusey, *op. cit.*, pp. 105, 106; Hagenbach, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. p. 209.

(*e*) At the Council of Florence, 1439 A.D., the Greeks accepted language equivalent to that received at Lyons, and with a similar result in the East. For citation, see pp. 235, 236, below. Cf. Pusey, *op. cit.*, pp. 102–105.

(*f*) At the Synod of Bethlehem (Jerusalem), 1672 A.D., the Orientals sanctioned language contained in an *Orthodox Confession*, which had been issued by Eastern patriarchs in 1643 A.D. — that the Holy Ghost "proceeds from the Father only, as the fountain and principle of the Godhead . . . caused and spirated from the Father alone, and sent into the world through the Son." H. B. Swete, *op. cit.*, p. 1, note. This language is not free from ambiguity, but has helped to crystallize the Eastern tendency to deny any kind of *eternal* procession of the Spirit from the Son.

(*g*) At the second of two Conferences held at Bonn, 1874 and 1875 A.D., in the interests of reunion, a series of propositions, based upon an inadequate interpretation of St. John of Damascus, was adopted — more favourable to the Oriental point of view than to our own. Given, with suggested amendments, by Pusey, *op. cit.*, note 1, pp. 182–184. But see the Reports of these Conferences edited by H. P. Liddon, 1875 and 1876.

A correspondence in the London *Guardian*, running through several issues of Dec., 1909, and Jan., 1910, throws much light on modern opinion in the East.

and these will be considered in another chapter.[1] It seems sufficient at this point to say that two important points of agreement are discoverable in the somewhat diverse terminologies of the theological writers of the fourth and fifth centuries: (*a*) that the Father is the fountain of Deity, so that the Holy Spirit proceeds *principaliter* from Him; (*b*) that the Son cannot be excluded from the mystery of the eternal spiration, so that in some sense the Holy Ghost also proceeds from or through Him. The sum of the matter is contained in the expression that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son — there being but one procession, and but one *principium* thereof.[2]

[1] Ch. vii. § 7. The contention of G. B. Howard, *Schism Between the Oriental and Western Churches*, and others, that the third Ecum. Council forbade *all* additions to the Creed, cannot be maintained. A larger Creed than that Council adopted was sanctioned by the fourth Council, and is now everywhere in use. On the canonical issue, see Pusey, *op. cit.*, pp. 33–96; Thomas Richey, *Nicene Creed and the Filioque*, N. Y., 1884.

[2] Dr. Pusey, cited above, gives as an amended form of the Bonn doctrinal propositions, the following:

(1) "The Holy Ghost goeth forth out of the Father (ἐκ τοῦ πατρός) as the Beginning (ἀρχή), the Cause (αἰτία), the Source (πηγή), of the Godhead."

(2) "The Holy Ghost goes not forth out of the Son (ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ) *as a distinct Source of Being*, because there is in the Godhead but one Beginning (ἀρχή), one Cause (αἰτία)."

(3) "The Holy Ghost goes forth out of the Father through the Son eternally."

(4) (Substitute for Nos. 4 to 6 of the Conference) "The Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and the Son together, since they are essentially One, but principally from the Father."

§ 15. The term ὑπόστασις was more sharply crystallized in its theological meaning, and the term φύσις, previously employed somewhat loosely, was given the usage which it has since retained in catholic theology, by being applied to the settlement of the Nestorian and Eutychian controversies. As against Nestorianism, it was determined once for all that the two natures of our Lord are the natures of one Person;[1] and, as against Eutychianism, the duality

[1] Owing partly to a desire to emphasize — somewhat one-sidedly — the Manhood of Christ, and partly to the arbitrary elements in St. Cyril's conduct at Ephesus, his position has been misunderstood by many modern writers. He unquestionably employed terms that, in the hands of inferior partisans, became the basis of monophysite error. But this was due to the as yet unsettled state of terminology touching the hypostatic union — a confusion which his own explanations, defective as they sometimes were, helped to remove. In his second letter to Nestorius, subsequently adopted by the 3d and 4th Ecum. Councils, he used clear language: "Diverse are the natures which are combined into this true union, but from them both is one Christ and Son; not as if the diversity of natures were annihilated because of the union, but rather that Godhead and Manhood . . . constitute for us the one Lord Jesus Christ." In his letter to John of Antioch, which embodied the final settlement of controversy between them, and which was subsequently adopted by the 4th Ecumenical Council, he says, in agreement with John, "We confess our Lord Jesus Christ . . . to be perfect God and perfect Man, . . . of one essence with the Father as touching the Godhead, of one essence with us as touching the Manhood." Unfortunately he subsequently employed the confusing phrase, *μία φύσις τοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη*, a source of future difficulty; but careful study shows that he was not forsaking his acknowledgment of two distinct natures in Christ, but was momentarily reverting to the older use of *φύσις*, as equivalent to *ὑπόστασις*. The best account of his position is perhaps that of Dr. Bright, in *Age of the Fathers*,

of natures in Christ's Person was affirmed.[1] These decisions determine a sharp distinction of meaning between person and nature, ὑπόστασις and φύσις.

The meaning of φύσις had wavered between that of οὐσία and that of ὑπόστασις. It now came to be almost equivalent to οὐσία, but denoted active properties and functions. Thus to assert our Lord's possession of the divine and human natures meant that He possesses the essential properties and functions of God and of man.[2]

The sixth Ecumenical Council, held at Constantinople in 680 A.D., accentuated the difference between person and nature, and settled it once for all, so far as the catholic terminology of the doctrines of

Vol. II, esp. pp. 380–381. For documents, see Percival, *Seven Ecum. Councils*, pp. 191 *et seq.*

It should be noted that in the letter to John of Antioch the term ὁμοούσιος was used to express the relation of Christ's Manhood to ours, and this use has become permanent. The term has therefore two theological meanings: (*a*) In the doctrine of the Trinity it signifies numerical identity of essence; (*b*) In the doctrine of the Incarnation it means generic unity of essence. It is important to remember this difference of meaning.

[1] The decree of Chalcedon repeats in substance the language of St. Cyril to John of Antioch, and concludes with an acknowledgment of "One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, acknowledged in two natures, without confusion, change, division, or separation; the difference of the natures being in no wise impaired by the union, but, on the contrary, the property of either nature being preserved, and concurring into one Person and one Hypostasis," etc. The *Tome* of Leo I, adopted by that Council, elaborates the doctrine thus defined. For documents see Percival, *op. cit.*, pp. 243 *et seq.* Cf. Hefele, *op cit.*, Vol. III. pp. 265 *et seq.*

[2] Cf. ch. vi. § 7, below.

the Trinity and the Incarnation are concerned, that the term person signifies the indivisible self of a rational nature, as distinguished from the natural attributes and functions which this self possesses, and by means of which it is manifested.

Even the will is to be referred to nature rather than to person; for like all the natural properties, it is *possessed* by the personal self rather than constitutes that self. The sixth Council decided that the one Person Christ possesses "two natural wills and two natural operations."[1] It is obvious that, if will is personality, there can be but one will in one person; but if will is a *possession* of person, and distinguishable from it, no contradiction is involved in declaring that the one Person of the Word-incarnate possesses two wills. The line of demarcation in catholic terminology between person and nature was thus made to include will in nature, and to limit the meaning of person to the self or ego of the nature thus defined.[2]

§ 16. The Nicene terminology, the development of which we have been describing, was faithfully translated into Latin. Οὐσία became *substantia* or *essentia;* φύσις, *natura;* ὑπόστασις, *persona* and *subsistentia.* Orthodox Western doctrine was embodied in the fifth century in the so-called Athanasian Creed; and this Creed has gained a certain acceptance in the East, although its assertion of the procession

[1] On the 6th Council, see Hefele, *op. cit.*, Vol. V. pp. 149 *et seq.*; Percival, *op. cit.*, pp. 325 *et seq.*

[2] See ch. vi. § 6, below.

of the Holy Spirit from the Son is not preserved in the versions which are there used.[1]

The decisions of the Ecumenical Councils and the catholic Creeds authoritatively register what time has shown to be a permanent determination of the primary elements of theological terminology in relation to trinitarian doctrine. This terminology has its most important patristic embodiment in St. Augustine's *De Trinitate* and St. John of Damascus' *De Fide Orthodoxa*. Various trinitarian controversies have troubled the Church in later times; but the errors which have given rise to them have been revivals of the heresies which were anciently condemned.[2]

Accordingly the task of later catholic writers has been to expound and defend the terms of the settlement which was completed by the Ecumenical Councils.[3] The terminology of these Councils has not been displaced, but its meaning has been ex-

[1] On the Athan. Creed, see p. 18, note 1, above.

[2] The dogmatic aim of this treatise does not require that we should give their history. This can be studied with the aid of Hagenbach, *op. cit.*, §§ 170, 234, 262, 295; Dorner, *Person of Christ*, Div. II. Vol. II. pp. 157–171, 249–265; Vol. III (Append. by P. Fairbairn), pp. 340–466; A. Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, Vol. VII. ch. iii.; Geo. P. Fisher, *Hist. of Christ. Doc.*, Period III. chh. v, ix; Period V. ch. ii; Nelson's *Life of Bishop Bull;* and Van Mildert's *Life of Daniel Waterland* (Waterland's *Works*, Vol. I). From the antitrinitarian point of view, J. H. Allen, *Historical Sketch of the Unitarian Movement;* R. Wallace, *Antitrinitarian Biography.*

[3] See a valuable passage in W. Sanday's *Christologies Ancient and Modern*, pp. 105, 106.

pounded in relation to the forms of thought and expression of each succeeding age. The systematic treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity has become more elaborate, and none of the ancient writers could have produced such treatises as those of St. Thomas Aquinas, Petavius, Ruiz, and Bishop Bull. Yet these treatises do but develop, systematize, and expound the terminology which the writers of the Nicene age established.

CHAPTER IV

BIBLICAL INDUCTION

I. *Introduction*

§ 1. The two previous chapters have been concerned with the progressive revelation, and subsequent ecclesiastical definition, of the doctrine of the Trinity. We have now to consider the biblical evidence of that doctrine.[1] In doing so we shall be obliged to reckon a second time with certain data discussed in describing its revelation. But the repetitions involved are more apparent than real; for, although the same data are twice considered, they are historically treated in the first instance and inductively in the second.

We say inductively; for, on account of reasons previously given,[2] we shall not employ the pertinent

[1] Every systematic treatise of the Trinity deals, of course, with its biblical evidence. In particular, see Bp. Pearson, *Apos. Creed;* D. Waterland, *Works;* Liddon, *Divinity of Our Lord;* W. J. Sparrow-Simpson, *Christ. Doc. of God*, Lec. i; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.* §§ 92–94; Franzelin, *de Deo. Trino*, Th. i-vii. A very convenient, although uncritical, compilation of references is contained in Wm. Jones, *Cath. Doc. of the Trinity.* In view of recent biblical criticism, it is necessary to consult the appropriate articles, in the latest Bible Dictionaries, especially in Hastings. Also A. B. Davidson, *Theol. of the Old Test.;* Geo. B. Stevens, *Theol. of the New Test.;* and the critical commentaries, *passim.*

[2] See ch. ii. § 5, above.

texts of Scripture as so many independent proofs of our doctrine, but as affording data which, when regarded in their historical and biblical context and duly co-ordinated, can be perceived to justify and establish the trinitarian hypothesis of catholic doctrine.

It is to be remembered that scriptural induction depends for validity upon the presupposition that the Bible, in all its parts, is the Word of God, whatever may have been the method employed by the Holy Spirit in making it to be this. Unless the teaching of Scripture[1] concerning God can be invariably treated as coming from God, biblical induction can have no validity for establishing the revealed source of our doctrine. Accordingly those who reject our presupposition will inevitably remain unconvinced by our evidence. But to reject our presupposition is logically inconsistent with any form of biblical Christianity. It involves a mental attitude which we cannot reasonably hope to influence by biblical argument.

§ 2. Before undertaking the task before us, we have to reckon with the obtrusive circumstance that the Scriptures everywhere teach and emphasize the truth that there is but one God. No doctrine can be regarded as established by scriptural evidence if it is really inconsistent with this teaching, which is quite too clear and emphatic either to be overlooked

[1] By the teaching of Scripture we mean its teaching when adequately interpreted, the human element being intelligently allowed for. See *Authority, Eccles. and Biblical*, ch. vii. §§ 10–12.

or to be explained away. The truth that "the Lord our God is one Lord"[1] is the primary article of faith set forth in the Old Testament,[2] is reiterated by Our Lord,[3] and is clearly insisted upon by apostolic writers.[4] Obviously, if to acknowledge that three distinct Persons are entitled in strict parlance to be called God, and therefore to be worshipped, is inconsistent with an unequalified assertion that there is but one Divine Being, who is indivisible and will not share His glory with another, then we must regard the doctrine of the Trinity as unscriptural, and as essentially pagan in its affinities.

Unitarians insist that to acknowledge three divine Persons cannot be reconciled with there being but one God, and many writers have made merry over the alleged belief of trinitarians that three equals one and one equals three in God. It is necessary before going further, therefore, to insist that the notions signified in theology by the terms "being" and "person" are not the same. Experience indeed teaches that, in the case of men, a plurality of persons involves a plurality of separate individual beings. But to say that this represents an *a priori* necessity in all being, so that the existence of more than one personal ego in one and the same being is impossible and unthinkable, is to beg the question. Three beings and three

[1] Deut. vi. 4.

[2] Among the most important passages *ad rem* are Exod. xx. 3; Deut. iv. 35; 1 Kings viii. 60; Isa. xliv. 6; xlv. 22.

[3] Esp. in St. Mark xii. 29; St. John xvii. 3.

[4] Cf. 1 Cor. viii. 4–6; Gal. iii. 20; 1 Tim. ii. 5; St. Jas. ii. 19.

persons are not identical notions, and to assert that belief in three divine Persons precludes belief in the essential unity of God is to make a wider generalization than the facts of experience justify. We cannot learn the possibilities of divine personal subsistence except through the self-manifestation of God.[1]

Postponing to its proper place a fuller treatment of the term "person,"[2] we may say at this point that to assert the existence of three Persons in God means merely to say that there are three Egos in Him, the distinction being such as to warrant the use of distinguishing names and of plural personal pronouns, and being involved in the very essence of God, so as to have eternal validity. But it does not mean that these three Egos are separate beings, or that they are to be regarded as mutually independent individuals.

In view of these considerations and distinctions, it can be shown that the biblical insistence upon divine unity in being does not exclude belief in a trinity of divine Persons, as the term person is employed in the catholic doctrine, unless biblical teaching includes an explicit denial of personal distinctions within the indivisible Godhead. No such denial can be found in Scripture. It is true that God uses personal pronouns in the singular number in referring to Himself. Thus He says, "I am God, and there is none

[1] Cf. ch. v. §§ 9, 10, below.

[2] The history of the term has been touched upon in ch. iii, esp. §§ 7, 15, 16, above. Its meaning in theology will be more fully discussed in ch. vi, below.

else."[1] But this is equivalent to saying "I am God, and there is no other Divine Being." It may not be taken to mean, "There is no distinction of Persons in Me." The fact emerges, therefore, in reckoning with scriptural assertions of divine unity, that *even in their baldest and most emphatic forms they do not disagree with the trinitarian hypothesis.*[2]

§ 3. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that, while also asserting the unity of God, the New Testament ascribes divine rank to several distinct Persons. As might be expected in view of the progressive method of revelation, New Testament teachings throw some light upon the manner in which God is one — a manner there shown to be consistent with a coincident acknowledgment of one God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ. St. Paul says, "For though there be that are called gods, . . . yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through Him."[3] "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus."[4] With such language

[1] Isa. xlv. 22.

[2] D. Waterland shows, in *Lady Moyer Sermons*, IV (*Works*, Vol. II. pp. 84 *et seq.*), that the unity of God which Scripture teaches is not personal but essential.

[3] 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.

[4] 1 Tim. ii. 5. Cf. Job ix. 33, where the patriarch is represented as complaining, "There is no daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both"; and St. John xiv. 6: "No one cometh to the Father, but by Me."

should be compared our Lord's words, "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ."[1] Surely eternal life cannot be identified with knowledge of a creature. We therefore find our Lord acknowledging a Person whom He clearly distinguishes from Himself to be the only true God, while at the same time asserting for Himself a relation to eternal life which can only be attributed to one who is truly divine. This combined acknowledgment of divine unity and assertion of the divine rank of two Persons cannot be made to appear self-consistent, except on the supposition that, within the indivisible essence of "the only true God," more than one divine Person subsists. That such is the true explanation is borne out by our Lord's words on another occasion: "I and My Father are one."[2]

II. *Old Testament Implications*

§ 4. (*a*) Coming to our induction, the first group of data which ought to be reckoned with is connected with the divine name. The most common of the names of God in the Old Testament, *Elohim*,[3] is plural, but is constantly used to signify the one true God. That the Old Testament writers used this word with conscious reference to a plurality of persons in one God cannot, of course, be maintained. They may have

[1] St. John xvii. 3.
[2] St. John x. 30. Cf. xiv. 9–11.
[3] אֱלֹהִים

employed it as a plural of majesty.[1] It has also been regarded as a relic of the polytheism which the prophets were concerned to eradicate from Israel's religion.[2] But in any case the fact is worthy of note that divinely inspired prophets, whose chief anxiety was to extinguish polytheistic practices and conceptions, and who were quite capable of discerning the meaning of the names of God which they employed,[3] did not shrink from *retaining* this plural name, even when especially concerned to proclaim the unity of God.[4] The inspiring mind which thus appropriated men's use of the plural in teaching that God is one was divine; and it is at least a rational view that, whatever the human writers intended or did not intend,[5] the Holy Spirit was controlling the method of asserting the unity of God with intentional reference to the plurality

[1] The view of modern critical scholars in general — *e.g.* Driver, *Genesis*, p. 402; A. B. Davidson, in Hastings, *Dic. of Bible*, *s. v.* "God (in O T)," p. 199.

[2] By Herder (as cited by Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 49, 50).

[3] Old Testament writers, and the Israelites in general, attached considerable importance to the choice of names, and were unlikely to apply a name to God which was incongruous with their belief in Him.

[4] In Deut. vi. 4: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God (אֱלֹהֵינוּ) is one Lord." The name occurs many hundreds of times, and in all parts of the Old Testament. Cf., in addition to previous citations, R. Kittel, in Schaff-Herzog, *Encyc.*, *s. v.* "Elohim"; A. J. Maclean, in Hastings, one vol. *Dic. of Bib.*, *s. v.* "God," p. 299.

[5] The divine meaning of an inspired literature in an early stage of a progressive revelation cannot be limited to the conscious intention of its human writers. The assumption that it is thus limited vitiates much recent critical exegesis.

of divine Persons in the Godhead which was to be revealed in the fulness of time. It cannot rightly be maintained, however, that we here possess a *proof* of the Trinity: — far from it. But we have a peculiarity in prophetic language which certainly agrees with, and probably foreshadows, the later trinitarian teaching of the New Testament.

In the New Testament we find what at least looks like an answer to the problem raised by the use of the name Elohim. It consists in the setting forth of a new covenant name of God, a name into which all members of that covenant are required to be baptized. This new name is given by our Lord as constituting one name, but it plainly signifies three Persons. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name [singular number] of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."[1] A plural name of God in the Old Testament for one Being, and a singular name of God in the New Testament which describes three Persons, constitute a combination of data that seems to lend itself to the confirmation of the trinitarian hypothesis of catholic doctrine. At all events it agrees therewith, and our argument does not require us to say more.

§ 5. (*b*) We come next to several instances in the Old Testament where God is represented as referring to Himself in the plural number. "And

[1] St. Matt. xxviii. 19. On the genuineness of this passage, see F. H. Chase, in *Journal of Theol. Stud.*, July, 1905, art. I; Plummer, *St. Matt.*, pp. 431–434.

God said, Let us make man in our image," etc.[1] "And the Lord said, Behold, the man is become as one of us."[2] "And the Lord said, . . . Go to, let us go down."[3] "And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us."[4] The ancient fathers not unreasonably took these methods of speech as foreshadowing the more explicit language of the New Testament.[5] Jewish writers, followed by a few others, including Delitzsch, interpret these passages as having reference to the heavenly court of Angels ministering to God. Dr. Driver and other modern exegetes associate such language with the plural of majesty. "It might well be," this writer says, "that, on a solemn occasion like this, when God is represented as about to create a being in His own 'image,' and to impart to him a share in that fulness of sovereign prerogatives possessed by Himself, He should adopt this unusual and significant mode of expression."[6] Mentioning the

[1] Gen. i. 26.

[2] Gen. iii. 22.

[3] Gen. xi. 6, 7.

[4] Isa. vi. 8.

[5] Thus St. Hilary, *de Trin.*, iv. 18, says, "When we read, 'Let Us make man after Our image and likeness,' these two words 'Us' and 'Our' reveal that here is neither one isolated God, nor yet one God in two dissimilar Persons. . . . For the words 'our image' — not 'our images' — prove that there is one nature possessed by both." Other passages are cited by Petavius, *op. cit.*, II. vii. 4 *et seq.*; and Franzelin, *de Trin.*, Th. vi. 1. Cf. Liddon, *op. cit.*, pp. 50, 51; R. Owen, *Dog. Theol.*, ch. v. § 3.

[6] *Book of Genesis*, p. 14.

patristic view, as given above, he says rather shortly, "But this is to anticipate a much later stage in the history of revelation." Such a comment is quite inconclusive, for it presupposes that the forms of a progressive revelation, inspired at every step by one divine mind, cannot in earlier stages be determined in any observable manner by the end in view — that is, by the purpose of a divine self-manifestation which, when completed, was to teach mankind of the divine Trinity. It needs proof to maintain that no sign of the ultimate trend of revelation can be found in its early stages by those who have come to the knowledge of its final results.

To repeat what has been said above, the complete bearing of early revelations preserved in Holy Scripture cannot rightly be limited to the conscious thought of the human writers. They were inspired in relation to purposes which were wider, and more determinate in prospective significance, than they could be expected to understand. They necessarily wrote more significantly for the readers of future ages than they knew; and this larger significance is reasonably taken to be part of the meaning of the Holy Spirit who inspired them, and whose inspiration must to some degree have determined their choice of language.[1]

[1] See *Authority Eccles. and Biblical*, ch. vii. §§ 12, 15. Cf. 1 St. Pet. i. 11 *et seq.*, and H. B. Swete's comment, in *The Holy Spirit in the New Test.*, pp. 260, 261. He refers to Edghill, *Evidential Value of Prophecy*, pp. 546 *et seq.* See also *Cambridge Bibl. Essays*, p. 417 (quoted with approval by W. Sanday, *Christologies, Ancient and Modern*, p. 231).

The passages which are being considered are not here treated as explicit revelations of the Trinity. They cannot thus be understood. But their peculiarities, it is maintained, are such as agree with the supposition that the Trinity of divine Persons, yet to be explicitly made known, determined to an appreciable extent the form in which preparatory teaching was afforded to Israel — appreciable, that is, to those who read the Scriptures from the New Testament standpoint.

This standpoint will be made clear and substantiated in the subsequent course of our argument. It is enough at this point to note that, whenever our Lord makes reference to the Father and the Holy Spirit, His use of pronouns unmistakably involves and clearly articulates the distinction of Persons in God which we have seen apparently to be implied, although not provably revealed, in the Old Testament usage which has been mentioned. Whenever our Lord either addresses or refers to the Father, His use of pronouns clearly shows that, when He declared Himself to be one with the Father,[1] He did not mean to identify His own Person with that of the Father.[2] In a similar way His pronominal references to the Holy Spirit are absolutely inconsistent with the notion that the Son and the Holy Spirit are one

[1] St. John x. 30.

[2] Examples are most frequent in St. John, esp. chh. xiv–xvii. But cf. St. Matt. xi. 25–27; xxvi. 39, 42; xxvii. 46; St. Mark xiv. 36; xv. 34; St. Luke x. 21; xxii. 42; xxiii. 46.

Person; and also preclude an identification of the Holy Spirit with the Father's Person.[1]

§ 6. (*c*) Proceeding with our induction, we call attention to the fact that while, as might be expected in literary memorials of a progressive revelation of God, the trinity of divine Persons is nowhere explicitly declared in the Old Testament Scriptures, certain passages in them seem very peculiar unless we explain them as implying a threefold distinction in the Godhead.[2] The meaning of this distinction remains obscure in the Old Testament, but falls in line with the clear distinction of Persons which the New Testament makes between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The appearance of the Lord to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre in the guise of three men is a notable instance.[3] This theophany is definitely described as an appearance of the Lord. Yet Abraham sees three men, who are addressed or referred to in the narrative both in the singular and in the plural number. A less obtrusive but unmistakable association of the number three with God appears in the threefold benediction

[1] St. John xiv. 16, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7, 13-15.

[2] St. Cyril Jerus., *Catech.* x. 6–9, affords a fair example of patristic argument on this line.

[3] Gen. xviii. St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, ii. 19–22, regards this theophany as a revelation of the Trinity. Old Test. theophanies were generally regarded by the fathers as manifestations of the Son of God. Medd, *One Mediator*, App. I. note vii, gives a survey of patristic opinion. Cf. Liddon, *op. cit.*, pp. 52–60; Blunt, *Dic. of Theol.*, *s.v.* "Theophany"; a Lapide, *Comm. in Gen.*, xviii; Franzelin, *op. cit.*, Th. vi. 2.

which the priests of Aaron were commanded to use: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee: The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." "So," it is said, "shall they put My Name upon the children of Israel."[1] With this should be compared the threefold ascription of glory to God described by Isaiah as given by the Seraphim: "And one cried to another, and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory."[2] To these examples should be added the passages in which God, His Word, and His Spirit seem to be referred to in a co-ordinate manner. Thus in the Psalms we read, "By the *Word* of the *Lord* were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the *breath* of His mouth."[3] And what is here said in brief seems to be involved in the account of creation in Genesis, where Elohim is the Creator, the Spirit of God hovers over the face of the waters, and the Word of God, uttered in the phrase "Let there be," is the instrument by which everything is made.[4] We shall not find in the Old Testament that any other plural number is definitely associated with God and His Name, except three. This phenomenon seems significant, to say the least. And the Old Testament anticipation of titles applied in the New Testament

[1] Numb. vi. 24–27. Cf. Liddon, *op. cit.*, pp. 51, 52.
[2] Isa. vi. 3.
[3] Psa. xxxiii. 6.
[4] Gen. i. Cf. Isa. xxxiv. 16.

to the second and third Persons — the Word and the Spirit — is too remarkable to be dismissed as meaningless when we remember that the two Testaments describe a progressive revelation of God which in all its stages comes from one divine source.

§ 7. (*d*) Other Old Testament passages — some of which became the basis of later Jewish speculations concerning the Logos and the Spirit[1] — forbid that we should thus dismiss these foreshadowings of trinitarian doctrine. Reference was made in an earlier chapter[2] to a double teaching of messianic prophecy, that the Messiah was to be divine and yet to be other in Person than the Father; also to the teaching of the Old Testament concerning the Holy Spirit.

The messianic prophecies, when taken in their biblical order,[3] resemble a processional hymn, which when first heard at a distance gives only a vague musical impression, this becoming, however, more and more determinate as the choir approaches, until at last the ear receives clearly distinguishable notes and words of sacred beauty and meaning.[4] Whatever

[1] See ch. ii. § 9, above.

[2] See ch. ii. § 8 (last two paragraphs).

[3] The biblical order does not in all respects correspond to the chronological order of production; but it may hardly be regarded as accidental. It is too coherent, when considered from the New Testament standpoint, to be considered otherwise than as divinely intended. Cf. W. J. Gold, *Sacrificial Worship*, pp. v, vi.

[4] On Messianic prophecy, see Benj. Dorr, *Principal Prophecies and Types of the Old. Test. Rel. to Christ;* Hengstenberg, *Christol. of the O. T.;* F. Delitzsch, *Messianic Prophecies;* Liddon, *op. cit.*, pp.

vagueness of meaning may have been conveyed to its first recipients by the assurance given in Genesis that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and that the serpent should bruise his heel,[1] this vagueness gradually clears away in the later stages of prophecy until Israel becomes possessed of a very definite messianic hope, and the more thoughtful and spiritually minded Jew learns that the Messiah, man of sorrows[2] though He was to be, could not adequately be described in terms applicable to a mere man. No doubt many exalted descriptions of the Christ, if they stood alone, might be explained as rhetorical. One who was to be "the chiefest among ten thousand,"[3] and whose dominion was to extend from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth,"[4] might naturally be described in still more glorious terms without any intention of co-ordinating Him with Yahveh. But the Messiah is frequently referred to by Old Testament writers in terms that cannot be relieved of blasphemous meaning unless we assume that the coming Christ, clearly distinguished from the Father, was indeed no other than very God, possessing with the Father the

74–94; Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, II. pp. 145–165. On its results in the Jewish mind, see Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *s. vv.* "Jesus Christ," pp. 608, 609 (by W. Sanday); "Messiah," I (by V. H. Stanton); J. Drummond, *The Jewish Messiah.*

[1] Gen. iii. 15.

[2] Isa. liii. 3.

[3] Song of Sol., v. 10.

[4] Psa. lxxii. 8.

ineffable Name and the indivisible Godhead. His being also very Man constitutes Him the Daysman for whom Job craved, capable of laying His hand upon both God and man.[1] But to be such a Daysman He must fully share in the nature of both; and Job prophetically describes Him as one then living, in whom He should see God.[2]

When David is represented as saying of the messianic seed that had been promised to him,[3] "The Lord saith unto my Lord, 'Sit Thou at My right hand'" etc.,[4] he employed a method of speech which was to convict Christ's enemies of failure to accept the teaching of their own Scriptures in rejecting His claims. Well did our Lord ask them, "If David then calleth Him Lord, how is He his Son?"[5] The coming King is addressed in another Psalm as God, although clearly distinguished from one who is described as His God. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. . . Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated wickedness: Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee." Further on the King's future bride is addressed. "So shall the King desire thy beauty: For He is thy Lord; and worship thou Him."[6] In still another Psalm a hint is given of the reason why One who is other in person than the Father can be hon-

[1] Job ix. 33.
[2] Job xix. 25–27.
[3] 2 Sam. vii. 12–16.
[4] Psa. cx. 1.
[5] St. Matt. xxii. 41–45. Cf. St. Mark xii. 35–37; St. Luke xx. 41–44.
[6] Psa. xlv. 6–11.

oured as Lord. "The Lord said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. . . . Now therefore be wise, O ye Kings: . . . Serve the Lord with fear, . . . Kiss the Son lest He be angry, and ye perish," etc.[1]

Turning to the Book of Isaiah, two messianic prophecies may be cited, among others, which point the same way. Whatever critical conclusion may be adopted as to whether Isaiah was conscious of predicting a virgin-birth for the Messiah, the messianic reference is unmistakable when he says, "Behold a virgin [or maiden] shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel."[2] The New Testament interpretation of this prophecy[3] must determine, for those who believe in the inspiration of the canonical Scriptures, the meaning of the Holy Spirit in this passage — that the coming maiden's child was to be "God with us." Still more explicitly the prophet says elsewhere, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,[4] Prince of Peace."[5]

[1] Psa. ii. 6–12. Cited in Acts xiii. 33 and Heb. i. 5; v. 5.

[2] Isa. vii. 13–17. See A. B. Davidson, in Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *s. v.* "Immanuel," for the modern view of this passage.

[3] St. Matt. i. 22, 23.

[4] Not "*the* everlasting Father," as in the version of 1611. The paternal aspect of His government is referred to. He is not identified with God the Father.

[5] Isa. ix. 6.

Jeremiah is equally explicit. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, . . . and this is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness."[1] Micah says, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratha, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth into Me that is to be Ruler in Israel; *whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.*"[2] The usual indirection of describing the *name* of the Messiah is here avoided, and He is directly said to be what no created being can claim to be, "from everlasting."

Numerous other passages could be cited in which the Messiah is described in terms which cannot be reconciled with the monotheistic teaching of the Old Testament, unless we co-ordinate them, and bring them into line, with the later teaching of the New Testament, that in the indivisible unity of God three Persons subsist, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.[3]

[1] Jerem. xxiii. 5, 6. Cf. xxxiii. 15, 16.

[2] Mic. v. 2.

[3] Especially Zech. xiii. 7: "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts"; and Mal. iii. 1: "Behold I send My messenger. . . . and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple," etc., which should be compared with St. Matt. xi. 10. See Liddon, *op. cit.*, Lec. ii.

Old Testament language, wherein Israel's Saviour is identified with Jehovah, is interpreted in the New Testament as having reference to Christ. This can be seen by comparing Isa. viii. 13, 14 with 1 St. Pet. ii. 7, 8; Isa. liv. 5 with St. John iii. 29; Isa. vi. 5 with

§ 8. (*e*) With this teaching we feel bound also to co-ordinate the numerous references in the Old Testament to the Holy Spirit.[1] As might be expected, these references are not so definitive as are the descriptions of the Messiah, but their number leads us to discern an emphasis upon the Spirit which, to say the least, prepares the way for the later revelation of His distinct personality; and in some passages this personality seems to be at least suggested, if not necessarily involved. Three passages may be cited from Isaiah, in which He is referred to in terms which suggest that He is an Agent. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counsellor hath taught Him."[2] "And now the Lord God hath sent me, and His Spirit."[3] "But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit."[4]

If He is a Person, and our knowledge of later revelations assures us of this fact, He is everywhere placed on a level with God, and by Him operations are achieved which cannot be performed by creaturely

St. John xii. 41; Isa. xliv. 6 with Revel. xxii. 13; Isa. xliii. 11 with 2 St. Pet. iii. 18. These and other comparisons are emphasized by D. Waterland in his *Vindication* and other works. We shall treat of the formerly much discussed passage in Prov. viii. 22 in ch. v. § 5, below.

[1] On Old Test. references to the Holy Spirit, see H. B. Swete, in *Dic. of Christ. Biog., s. v.* "Holy Ghost"; and in Hastings, *Dic. of Bib., s. v.* "Holy Spirit," A; J. S. Gubelmann, *Person and Work of the Holy Ghost in O. T. Times;* A. B. Davidson, *Theol. of the Old Test.*, pp. 115–129.

[2] Isa. xl. 13.

[3] xlviii. 16.

[4] lxiii. 10.

agency. In particular His efficient agency is present in the creation of the world,[1] and of man;[2] and none can escape His omnipresence.[3] He is not inferior to the Messiah, for He is to be bestowed upon Him, becoming for Him "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord."[4] Whatever is said, therefore, in the Old Testament which teaches that the Messiah is "from everlasting," and "Mighty God," "Immanuel," indicates that the Spirit which rests upon Him is divine.[5]

III. *New Testament Teaching*

§ 9. Thus far our biblical induction has been concerned chiefly with the Old Testament—its implications and anticipations of New Testament doctrine;—and we have not hesitated to interpret its obscure hints from the point of view of the clearer teaching of the New Testament. If, as the Christian doctrine of biblical inspiration requires us to believe, the course of revelation as described in the Scriptures was determined at every stage by one divine mind, no other method of interpreting the earlier

[1] Gen. i. 2. Cf. Psa. xxxiii. 6.

[2] Job xxxiii. 4.

[3] Psa. cxxxix. 7 *et seq.*

[4] Isa. xi. 1–2. Cf. lxi. 1; St. Luke iv. 16–21. It is to be remembered that the name Christ means anointed—that is, with the Holy Spirit.

[5] Jewish speculation concerning the Word and the Spirit, after the close of the Canon, is considered in ch. ii. § 9, above, where references are given.

stages can be regarded as intelligent and true. There remain to be considered the more positive assertions of Scripture concerning the divine Persons, Their co-equal rank in being, Their essential unity, and Their mutual relations in the Godhead. These assertions are naturally most frequent and explicit in the New Testament.[1]

§ 10. Assuming that the Godhead of the Father will be acknowledged by all who are in any sense Christian theists, we shall bring together some of the more important scriptural passages which either declare or clearly imply the Godhead of the second [2] and third Persons.

[1] On the trinitarian teaching of the New Test., see St. Augustine, *de Trinitate*, Lib. I; Illingworth, *Trinity*, Lec. iii; Bethune-Baker, *Early Hist. of Doc.*, pp. 11–15; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, §§ 92–94; Chas. F. D'Arcy, in Hastings, *Dic. of Christ*, *s. v.* "Trinity." Further references on New Test. teaching as to the second and third Persons will be given in §§ 10–13, below.

[2] On the teaching of the New Test. as to the Person of Christ, see Liddon, *Divinity of Our Lord*, Lecs. iv–vi; Thos. Jackson, *Works*, Vol. VII. pp. 174–196; M. F. Sadler, *Emmanuel*, ch. i; D. Waterland, *Vindication of Christ's Divinity*, and other works; W. Sanday, *Life of Christ in Recent Research*, ch. v; C. Gore, *The New Theol. and the Old Religion*, Lec. v; Nolloth, *Person of Our Lord;* Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *s. vv.* "Christology" (J. A. Beet); "Jesus Christ" (W. Sanday), pp. 622–624; "Son of God" (W. Sanday); "Son of Man" (S. R. Driver); Hastings, *Dic. of Christ*, *s. vv.* "Attributes of Christ" (H. Dundas); "Claims of Christ" (J. C. Lambert); "Divinity of Christ" (A. S. Martin); "Pre-eminence of Christ" (J. H. Farmer); "Son of God" (Jas. Stalker); "Son of Man" (Geo. P. Gould); Schaff-Herzog, *Encyc.*, *s. v.* "Jesus Christ" (B. B. Warfield); Fairbairn, *Philos. of the Christ. Religion*, pp. 443–457. A good patristic example is Novatian, *de Trin.*, 13–16, 21, 22.

(*a*) Operations and attributes are ascribed to Christ which cannot be ascribed to creatures. St. John tells us, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God,"[1] thus declaring Him at once to be eternal, distinct from Another who is called God, and Himself God. He proceeds to say, "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made . . . There was the true Light, even the Light which lighteth every man, coming into the world."[2] The Psalmist had already declared, "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made."[3] St. Paul writes of Christ, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in Him were all things created, . . . things visible and things invisible, . . . all things have been created through Him and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."[4] Again, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead."[5] The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says that God "appointed" His Son "heir of all things, through whom also He made the

[1] St. John i. 1.

[2] i. 3, 9, 10.

[3] Psa. xxxiii. 6.

[4] Col. i. 15–17. See J. B. Lightfoot, *in loc.*, and his interp. of πρωτότοκος. The ancient fathers, in their desire to rebut the Arian use of this text, referred the word to Our Lord's Incarnation. Lightfoot shows that this is both unnecessary and erroneous. The Son is described as firstborn — not *among* creatures, but — *in relation to them.* The word expresses His priority, absolute heirship and lordship. Cf. pp. 153, 154, below.

[5] Col. ii. 9.

worlds; who being the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had made purification of sins, sat down," etc.[1] The point of the argument which follows is that the Son is higher than the angels by virtue of divine sonship and dominion.[2] "And Thou, Lord," he adds, "in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands. They shall perish; but Thou continuest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; . . . and they shall be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail."[3] Other passages of similar import might be added, but these are sufficient for our induction.[4]

§ 11. (*b*) Our Lord's Godhead is also either declared by or involved in the titles which are given Him. Thus He is represented in the Apocalypse as saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty."[5] With this should be compared a passage in Isaiah, "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the First, and I am the Last; and beside Me

[1] Heb. i. 2–3.

[2] *vv.* 4–9.

[3] *vv.* 10–12.

[4] D. Waterland, *Works*, is very full on this subject. See in particular *Moyer Sermons*, ii, iii, vii; *Vindication of Christ's Divinity*, Qq. xi-xv.

[5] Revel. i. 8; ii. 8; xxii. 13.

there is no God."[1] In the Apocalypse He is also described as King of kings and Lord of lords,[2] although this title is chosen by St. Paul to describe the invisible God.[3] St. Paul also declares that in slaying Christ the rulers of this world "crucified the Lord of glory;"[4] and St. Peter accused the Jews of killing "the Prince of life."[5] According to the rendering adopted by the Revisers, St. Paul refers to Christ as "God blessed forever;"[6] and this accords with King James' version. Without rebuke, we are told, the doubting Thomas, when convinced of His resurrection, called Christ "my Lord and my God."[7] These New Testament titles are after all but counterparts of names applied to the Messiah in the Old Testament; *e.g.* "Mighty God," "the Lord our Righteousness," and others which have already been referred to in a previous section.[8]

§ 12. (*c*) To these data should be added the marvellous claims which Christ is represented in the Gospels as making for Himself. Their general nature and significance is not substantially affected by modern

[1] Isa. xliv. 6. Cf. Revel. xxi. 6.

[2] Revel. xvii. 13.

[3] 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16.

[4] 1 Cor. ii. 8. Cf. St. James ii. 1; Psa. xxiv. 7–10.

[5] Acts iii. 15.

[6] Rom. ix. 5. Cf. D. Waterland, *Moyer Serms.*, vi. (*Works*, Vol. II. p. 138).

[7] St. John xx. 28. Cf. Tit. ii. 13; 1 St. John v. 20.

[8] Section 7. See Waterland, *Moyer Serms.*, vi; Liddon, *op. cit.*, pp. 436, 437; Hastings, *Dic. of Christ*, *s. v.* "Names and Titles of Christ."

criticism, for they are so interwoven in the Gospel narratives that they cannot be eliminated without destroying the coherence and credibility of the Gospels. These narratives, however, possess the verisimilitude of truth to a unique degree, and they exhibit Christ to us as possessing a moral and spiritual perfection of character which could never have been imagined, much less described, if it were untrue to reality. Yet they represent Him as making claims for Himself, the making of which would be absolutely fatal to our belief in the perfection of any one who did not have within Himself a sane and trustworthy consciousness of being very God as well as very man. In brief, our belief in the substantial historical truth of the Gospels compels us to say that the Christ who is there portrayed to us is either God or not good.[1]

These claims appear with peculiar prominence in the fourth Gospel — a phenomenon due to the didactic purpose of its author; — but, as a general scrutiny of the references about to be given will show, the claims that are apparent in the other Gospels are abundantly sufficient to force upon us the dilemma which we have mentioned.

In the first place, Christ challenges the Jews to convict Him of sin;[2] and nowhere in any one of the Gospels do we find a trace in Him of that conscious-

[1] This dilemma has often been presented. In particular by Liddon, *op. cit.*, Lec. iv; and H. B. Ottley, *The Great Dilemma;* Maccoll, *The Creed*, pp. 136–140.

[2] St. John viii. 46. Cf. 1 St. John iii. 5; Heb. iv. 15; vii. 16–27.

ness of moral imperfection and of the need of repentance which constitutes the universal and necessary characteristic of merely human saints.[1] He claims to be our example: "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart."[2] He demands the love and obedience of His followers, even to the point of displacing all other obligations when they conflict therewith: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me."[3] He makes this demand because He is conscious that He is "the Way, the Truth and the Life," through whom alone can any one come to the Father.[4] In accordance with this mediatorial function He says, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them," this claim being made as the sufficient reason for assuring them that the Father will answer human prayer.[5] He also declares that He will be the future Judge of mankind.[6] He professes to amend and displace the law of God given of old by a simple, "But I say unto you."[7] The prophets had used the formula, "Thus saith the

[1] Cf. 1 St. John i. 8–10; Rom. iii. 9 *et seq.* See Hastings, *Dic. of Christ, s. vv.* "Character of Christ" (J. B. Kilpatrick); "Sinlessness" (Jas. Stalker); Nolloth, *Pers. of Our Lord*, pp. 223–226.

[2] St. Matt. xi. 29. Cf. Isa. liii. 7; Zech. ix. 9; Rom. viii. 29.

[3] St. Matt. x. 37, 38. The context, *vv.* 32–40, is to be noted.

[4] St. John xiv. 6. F. J. A. Hort, *The Way, The Truth, and the Life*, is a fine commentary on this text.

[5] St. Matt. xviii. 19, 20.

[6] St. Matt. xvi. 27; xxv. 31 *et seq.*

[7] St. Matt. vv. 27, 28. Tertullian, *Flesh of Christ*, 14, says that Christ said not "Thus saith the Lord," for Himself was Lord.

Lord"; but He uses the words repeatedly, "Verily I say unto you."[1] He claims to be greater than the prophets who had preceded Him, greater than Solomon, and greater than the very temple of God.[2] Condescending for love of us to make our nature His own, and as touching that nature to grow in wisdom, to be ignorant, to be inferior to the Father,[3] and in all things to obey the Father's will,[4] He none the less claims, in the midst of His earthly humiliation, to possess a knowledge of the Father in which no man shares except through Him,[5] to be able to raise Himself from the dead,[6] and to be conscious of all that the Father doeth, participating in the Father's work.[7] Conscious of an eternal existence before Abraham,[8] and claiming to have life in Himself by virtue of what He had received of the Father,[9] He sharply distinguishes His essential relationship to the Father from that in which men can share. He never coordinates Himself with others in His sonship, but

[1] See Nolloth, *op. cit.*, pp. 149–159. According to Liddon, this form of speech occurs 49 times in the synoptic Gospels, and "Verily, verily I say" 25 times in St. John. Cf. St. Matt. vii. 29: "He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes."

[2] St. Matt. xii. 6, 41, 42; St. Luke xi. 31, 32.

[3] Cf. pp. 154, 155, below.

[4] The subject is discussed at large in the author's *The Kenotic Theory*.

[5] St. Matt. xi. 27; St. John vii. 29; x. 15. Cf. Nolloth, *op. cit.*, pp. 160–184.

[6] St. John x. 18.

[7] St. John v. 17, 19.

[8] St. John viii. 56–58.

[9] St. John v. 26.

always distinguishes by such phrases as "your Father" and "My Father."[1] In the parable of the wicked husbandmen, given in all the synoptic Gospels,[2] He plainly distinguishes Himself from the prophets as a son is distinguished from servants. For reasons that will appear at a later stage of our induction,[3] He never baldly said, "I am God"; but the Jew could not mistake His meaning, and accused Him of blasphemy for making God His own Father,[4] and for claiming to be equal with God.[5]

The teaching of the passages in the New Testament to which reference has been made in this section — many more might have been given — is unmistakable. According to that teaching our Lord Jesus Christ is not the Father, and yet is essentially one with Him,[6] and is very God. There are therefore at least two Persons in the unity of the Godhead, the Father and the Son.[7]

[1] The two are combined in an antithesis in St. John xx. 17: "I ascend unto My Father and your Father." A concordance will show that He frequently uses such phrases as "My Father"; "Your Father"; "The Father"; "The Son" (referring to Himself); but never "Our Father," except when telling his disciples how *they* were to address God in prayer: "After this manner . . . pray *ye:* 'Our Father'" (St. Matt. vi. 9. Cf. St. Luke xi. 2). Christ describes Himself as "the Only-begotten Son of God": St. John iii. 16, 18. Cf. ch. i. 14, 18; 1 St. John iv. 9.

[2] St. Matt. xxi. 33–41; St. Mark xii. 1–11; St. Luke xx. 9–18.

[3] See p. 139, below.

[4] St. John v. 18: *πατέρα ἴδιον.* St. Paul calls Him God's own Son, *ἰδίου υἱοῦ*: Rom. viii. 32.

[5] St. John v. 18; x. 33.

[6] St. John x. 30.

[7] The subject will have to be taken up again when we treat of the Incarnation, in our sixth volume.

§ 13. (*d*) Further induction indicates that the Holy Spirit also participates in this unity.[1]

If Christ is good, He is also God; and if He is God, His teaching in things pertaining to God is absolutely determinative and final. Whatever limitations of knowledge He may have accepted in His human nature, these limitations could not have led Him into error concerning the nature of God, except upon the impossible supposition that the resources of His Manhood constituted His entire equipment as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Our primary data, therefore, in considering the teaching of the New Testament concerning the Person of the Holy Spirit, consist of the utterances of Christ concerning Him.[2]

These are chiefly to be found in the fourth Gospel. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."[3] It is because the Spirit is not given by measure unto Christ that He professes to speak the words of God.[4] "It is the Spirit that quickeneth."[5] He is personally

[1] On New Testament teaching concerning the Person of the Holy Spirit, see H. B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the N. Test.;* and in Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *s. v.* "Holy Spirit"; Hutchings, *Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*, pp. 19–32; Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, art. viii; Manning, *Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost;* Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, § 94; Hastings, *Dic. of Christ*, *s. vv.* "Holy Spirit" (Jas. Denney); "Paraclete" (R. W. Moss).

[2] Of primary value on this subject is H. B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the N. Test.*, pp. 147–168.

[3] St. John iii. 5.

[4] iii. 34.

[5] vi. 63.

distinct from Christ, "another Comforter," and "the Spirit of truth."[1] "He shall teach you all things."[2] He "proceedeth from the Father,"[3] and is sent by Christ.[4] He guides into all truth, shewing things to come, receiving the things of Christ and shewing them.[5] These teachings are confirmed by words of Christ reported in the synoptic Gospels. The apostles are told that when brought before rulers for His sake it should be given them what to say, "for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."[6] It is "by the Spirit of God" that Christ describes Himself as casting out devils,"[7] and the name of God into which believers are to be baptized includes within its application "the Holy Ghost."[8] It was "in the Holy Spirit" that David prophesied,[9] and He is given as a good gift by the Father to them that ask.[10] Obviously, One whose personality is thus witnessed to by the functions and titles ascribed to Him by the Son of God, who is clearly distinguished from both the Father and the Son, who is declared to be the Inspirer of Christ Himself, and the Source for us of all truth, who pro-

[1] xiv. 16. Cf. xv. 26; xvi. 13.
[2] xiv. 26.
[3] xv. 26.
[4] xvi. 7.
[5] xvi. 13, 14.
[6] St. Matt. x. 19, 20; St. Mark xiii. 11; St. Luke xii. 12.
[7] St. Matt. xii. 28.
[8] St. Matt. xxviii. 19.
[9] St. Mark xii. 36.
[10] St. Luke xi. 13.

ceeds from the Father, and is the Spirit of the Father, who shares with the Father and the Son in one divine name, by the use of which He imparts life in Baptism, obviously such an one can neither be confused in Person with the Father nor be ranked with creatures. If this last inference needs confirmation from Christ, He gives it when He teaches that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the one sin that "hath never forgiveness," but involves the guilt of "an eternal sin."[1]

§ 14. (*e*) The conclusion that the Holy Spirit is a truly divine Person, and yet distinct from the Father and the Son, is the only hypothesis which agrees with other teaching in the New Testament, whether found in the Gospels or in other apostolic writings.

Personal functions and attributes are ascribed to Him, and these functions and attributes are in a convincing number and variety of instances such as cannot truly be ascribed to a creature. It was by the operation of the Holy Spirit that the Blessed Virgin was enabled to conceive and bring forth the Son of God;[2] and several of our Lord's experiences and actions are described as effected by the Spirit. That a creature should exercise such functions in relation to Him who is described as divine is incredible. Thus Christ is said to have been anointed

[1] St. Mark iii. 28, 29. Cf. St. Matt. xii. 31, 32; St. Luke xii. 10. Also Isa. lxiii. 10; Ephes. iv. 30; Heb. vi. 4–8; x. 26–29.

[2] St. Luke i. 35.

for His mediatorial office by the Spirit;[1] He is led to be tempted of the devil by Him;[2] returns in the power of the Spirit into Galilee;[3] and gave commandment to His disciples "through the Holy Ghost."[4]

In line with His office of Comforter or Advocate, as described by Christ in St. John's Gospel, the Holy Spirit is referred to by apostolic writers as sovereign Source of truth and grace in all their ministry. It was by the descent of the Spirit upon them that they were enabled to demonstrate their mission on the day of Pentecost;[5] and the gift of the Holy Spirit was to be the privilege of believers[6] and the cause of all their graces and virtues.[7] It is this gift that characterizes the adopted children of God,[8] and which accounts for the place and function of each member of Christ.[9] The Spirit knoweth the things of God,[10] and it is through the Spirit that the Church learns the truth.[11] Justification and sanctification

[1] St. Matt. iii. 16; St. Mark i. 10; St. Luke iii. 22. Cf. St. Matt. xii. 18 with Isa. xlii. 1; and St. Luke iv. 18 with Isa. lxi. 1. Also Acts x. 38.

[2] St. Matt. iv. 1; St. Mark i. 12, 13; St. Luke iv. 1.

[3] St. Luke iv. 14.

[4] Acts i. 2.

[5] Acts ii. 2–4, 33.

[6] Acts ii. 38 (cf. Joel ii. 28, 29); viii. 15–17; xix. 2–5.

[7] Rom. v. 5; viii. 1–27; 1 Cor. xii. 3–11.

[8] Rom. viii. 14–16; Gal. iv. 6.

[9] 1 Cor. xii. 4–11.

[10] 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

[11] 1 Cor. xii. 8; Ephes. iii. 5; 1 St. John iii. 24; v. 6; ii. 20; Revel. ii. 8.

are results of His work in us,[1] and the fruits of righteousness are fruits of the Spirit.[2]

This Spirit is a Person, for He directs who shall be set apart to His ministry, referring to Himself by the personal pronoun "I,"[3] and He personally controls the movements of His ministers.[4] Other personal actions are ascribed to Him, and in particular He is said to work according to His will.[5] Such a Person was reasonably regarded by the apostles as divine. He is therefore described by them as eternal,[6] as omniscient,[7] and as possessing the power of the Most High.[8] His abiding place is a temple,[9] and this temple is described as the temple of God because of the indwelling Spirit.[10] To lie to Him is to lie to God.[11] Finally, as will appear later,[12] He is co-ordinated with the Father and the Son as sharing in their rank in being.

§ 15. (*f*) Our induction confirms the hypothesis of catholic doctrine that there is but one God, and yet that each of three distinct Persons are truly divine.

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 11; 2 Thess. ii. 13.
[2] Gal. v. 22–25.
[3] Acts xiii. 2. Cf. xx. 28.
[4] Acts viii. 29; x. 19, 20; xvi. 6, 7.
[5] 1 Cor. xii. 11.
[6] Heb. ix. 14.
[7] 1 Cor. ii. 10.
[8] St. Luke i. 35.
[9] 1 Cor. vi. 19.
[10] 1 Cor. vi. 20. Cf. iii. 16, 17; 2 Cor. vi. 16.
[11] Acts v. 3, 4.
[12] In §§ 15, 16.

The question which remains to be answered is this: What biblical data, if any, can be discovered which will help us to perceive how these opposite truths are to be held together without mutual contradiction being involved. If, contrary to sound reason, we were wholly to be guided by human analogies in determining the possibilities of divine personal subsistence, we should be obliged to conclude that the existence of three divine Persons involves the existence of three separate Gods. Person and being are not identical notions, but nowhere among human beings do we find more than one personal ego in one individual being. The scriptural teaching, therefore, that in the single and individual being of God three personal Subjects or Egos subsist, combines propositions which natural experience does not help us to hold together.[1] Accordingly, we are forced to have recourse to revelation and to enlarge our scriptural induction by reckoning with the data which throw light upon the manner in which these propositions are there co-ordinated.

It is, of course, not to be expected that Scripture will define the ineffable, and explain to finite minds how three Persons can subsist in one divine Being without division or confusion. But surely such a wealth of teaching about God as is afforded by Scripture is likely to supply some hints, and a point of view which will enable us to perceive that this teaching does not land us in obvious and hopeless contradiction. If Scripture demonstrably contradicts

[1] This difficulty is discussed in ch. v. §§ 9, 10, below.

itself in the primary subject-matter of its teaching, biblical induction is useless, and its results are negligible. As will be seen, however, the Scriptures in fact help us to acknowledge the unity of God and the Godhead of three Persons without contradicting ourselves, although they do not explain those elements of the mystery of the Trinity which are incapable of being explained to finite understandings.

At an earlier stage of our induction we saw that the manner in which the unity of God is taught in the Old Testament leaves room for a distinction of Persons within the indivisible Godhead, and in some instances suggests such distinction.[1] Nowhere in either Testament do we find warrant for confusing personality and individuality of being, or for the notion that every divine Person must have a separate Being. In the New Testament we find the three divine Persons habitually named and described in terms of mutual coinherence and inseparable relationship. The truth of coinherence, the doctrine that the divine Persons exist in each other, so that in each Person the whole Trinity is present,[2] is obviously implied in the teaching of Christ given in several chapters of St. John's Gospel.[3] Thus, in reply to Philip's request to show him the Father, He says, "Have I been so long a time with you, and dost thou

[1] See §§ 2, 3, above.

[2] This doctrine was discussed historically in ch. iii. § 12, above; and will be expounded in ch. vii. §§ 10, 11, below.

[3] Chh. xiv, xvi, xvii.

not know Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father . . . Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?"[1] So close is this internal unity that Christ baldly says, "I and My Father are one."[2] Yet we may not understand Him to mean "one in person," for He addresses the Father in terms which plainly declare Him to be another Person than Himself.[3] The same internal relationship is implied as between the Father and the Holy Spirit when St. Paul says, "Who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth save the Spirit of God."[4] The very name Spirit of God, often found in Scripture, seems to be used with consciousness of the existence of the Spirit in God, that is, in the Father. Moreover, when Christ promises that the Spirit will abide in His disciples, He seems to make this the basis of the further assurance, "I will not leave you desolate, I come unto you."[5]

§ 16. (*g*) Investigating the mutual relationships of the divine Persons, we notice in the first place that these are implied in the titles by which the Persons are distinguished, which teach also that each Person

[1] St. John xiv. 9–11.

[2] x. 30.

[3] Especially in His prayers to the Father. See St. Matt. xi. 25, 26; xxvi. 39–44 (cf. St. Mark xiv. 32–39); xxvii. 46; St. Luke xxii. 41; xxiii. 34, 46; St. John xi. 41, 42; xii. 27, 28; xvii. *passim.*

[4] 1 Cor. ii. 11.

[5] St. John xiv. 17, 18.

is distinguished and identified by His relationship to the other divine Persons. The Father is Father because of His eternal and only-begotten Son; the Son is Son because He is the Only-begotten of the Father;[1] and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit as Spirit of the Father[2] and of the Son.[3] The three Persons are thus exhibited, even in their titles, as bound together by virtue of an eternal procession, in which the Father is the ineffable origin, but is eternally possessed of His Son and Holy Spirit, three in one. The answer of the New Testament to the question, How are the divine Persons one with each other? is this: that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, and is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son.[4] This does not explain the problem of the co-existence of three Persons in one indivisible Essence and Being; but it does afford to us a point of view from which to apprehend the truth that the divine Persons are participant in one divine essence — an essence which cannot, we know, be divided or distributed to three separate beings.

These relationships of paternity, filiation, and pro-

[1] St. John i. 14, 18; iii. 16, 18; 1 St. John iv. 9. Cf. Acts xiii. 33; Heb. i. 5; v. 5.

[2] St. Matt. x. 20; xii. 18; Rom. viii. 11. Cf. St. John xv. 26. He is called the Spirit of God in St. Matt. iii. 14; xii. 28; Rom. viii. 9, 14; xv. 19; 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12, 14; iii. 16; vi. 11; vii. 40; xii. 3; 2 Cor. iii. 3; Ephes. iv. 30; 1 St. John iv. 2; Revel. xi. 11. Cf. St. Luke iv. 18.

[3] Acts v. 9; Gal. iv. 6; Phil. i. 19; 1 St. Pet. i. 11. In Rom. viii. 9, He is called both the Spirit of God, and of Christ.

[4] This implies that He proceeds in some sense from the Son as well as from the Father. See ch. vii. § 7, below.

cession determine and explain the manner in which the divine Persons are habitually referred to and described in the New Testament. Our Lord makes claims which, as we have seen, would be at least foolish, if not gravely culpable, unless He were truly God. Yet He never separates His claims from those of the Father. He never baldly says, "I am God"; but reveals His Godhead by revealing His eternal Sonship and economic functions. His example is adhered to by the apostolic writers. That they considered Christ to be God, and essentially co-equal with the Father, has been sufficiently established.[1] Yet it is not their formal usage to call Him God,[2] this title being employed when the Supreme Being is referred to without distinction of Persons, or else being applied to the Father.[3] We find, indeed, that when the divine Persons are mentioned together the title God is applied to the Father, and other names are given to the Son and the Holy Spirit.[4] The

[1] To mention a notable phrase, St. Paul says, in Phil. ii. 6, that Christ, "being in the Form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God." Cf. Col. ii. 9.

[2] The seeming exceptions are descriptive rather than instances of formal naming. Cf. St. John i. 1; xx. 28; Rom. ix. 5; 1 St. John v. 20.

[3] It is applied to the Father in very many instances. It is sufficient to refer to one instance in each of three sacred writers: Rom. xv. 6; 1 St. Pet. i. 3; St. John iii. 16. In the last instance it is our Lord Himself who thus names the Father.

[4] Rom. viii. 14–17, 26–29; 1 Cor. xii. 3–6; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; Gal. iv. 6; Ephes. iii. 2–5; iv. 4–6; v. 18–20; 1 St. Pet. i. 2–12; iv. 13–19; 1 St. John v. 4–6; St. Jude 20, 21; Revel. i. 4–6.

The instances in which "God" and either Christ or the Spirit are

reason is not far to seek. The name God, when used as a formal title, applies rather to the Trinity as a whole — that is, to the Creator without reference to the personal distinctions within the Godhead. It is safely applied, however, to the first Person of the Godhead, because the *principatus*, as it is called, or principle of divine procession and origin, so to speak, has its seat in Him. In Him, with peculiar obviousness, are involved the other divine Persons who proceed from Him. He is God without derivation. The Son and Spirit are God because of an eternal derivation of their Godhead from Him.[1] If the New Testament writers had named either the second or the third Person God, without accompanying explanation, they would have run the risk of seeming to make the Person thus named a separate God from the Father.

§ 17. Our biblical induction is completed. We have not attempted to make it exhaustive,[2] and many

named together are very numerous. The very names "Son of God" and "Spirit of God," imply that the name "God" is primarily given to the Father. See Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *s. v.* "God," p. 214.

[1] See ch. vii. § 8, below, where the doctrine of subordination is considered.

[2] Thus it might be shown, if we had the space, that the general manner of religious life and conversation of the first Christians is inexplicable except upon the double assumption that three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are entitled to be served and worshipped as divine; and yet that there is but one God. See Hugh M. Scott, in Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, extra vol., *s. v.* "Trinity," iv. The Church was living the doctrine of the Trinity before she defined it.

significant passages have been ignored. But the data which have been employed are taken from all parts of Scripture, and from every stage of the progressive revelation of God which the Bible describes. They are sufficiently representative and diverse to warrant the conclusion that the catholic doctrine of the Trinity is in accord with, and is confirmed by, the whole course of God's self-manifestation as recorded in the divine library of the Sacred Scriptures. That doctrine cannot be rejected without impugning the authority of the written Word of God.

CHAPTER V

DIFFICULTIES

I. *Biblical*

§ 1. Convincing as the biblical evidences of the doctrine of the Trinity have seemed to many generations of Christian students, the fact remains that numerous individual thinkers have not been persuaded by them. Modern Unitarianism is not limited in its support to the Unitarian denomination; and the influence of certain objections which have been brought against trinitarian doctrine at various periods in Christian history is sufficiently powerful to demand their brief consideration in a treatise of this kind.

These objections are partly biblical and partly rational; and we shall consider them in this order. The biblical objections are largely based upon detached passages of Scripture, interpreted without reference to the general course and meaning of revelation; and the persuasiveness of this form of criticism is to a considerable extent due to the mistaken habit of depending upon isolated proof-texts, instead of upon comprehensive induction, for biblical evidence of the catholic doctrine. Again, a considerable number of biblical difficulties arise from misapprehension touching certain elements of trinitarian doctrine, and from the effect upon biblical exegesis of failure

to assimilate and allow for the scriptural doctrine of the Incarnation.

§ 2. An induction of messianic prophecy, of the Gospel narratives, and of other pertinent hints and teachings of the New Testament, abundantly confirms and establishes the doctrine that Jesus Christ was not less really human than truly divine. The evidence of His being divine need not again be exhibited. We have sufficiently summarized it in the preceding chapter. That He was really human is not in our day seriously disputed, and this will be maintained, with appropriate biblical evidence, when we treat of Christ, in our sixth volume. That there were not two Christs, but that the ascription of divine and human predicates to our Lord in the Scriptures have reference to one and the same self or personal ego is also generally accepted, except by Nestorians. Finally, that the divine and human natures are diverse, so that to ascribe divine and human predicates to Christ means that He possesses two natures, each having its own distinct functions and attributes, is beyond controversy in historical Christian theology, and will also be established in our sixth volume. It is, however, lost sight of by modern kenoticists [1]

[1] The kenotic theory was developed under the conditions of the semi-monophysite forms of German-Lutheran thought. The original kenoticists mistakenly conceived of the Incarnation as an infusion of the Godhead into the Manhood. They were led, therefore, to infer that it involved a loss by the eternal Son of such divine attributes as are incapable of being imparted to our nature without destroying its human quality. See the author's *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 12–14 and ch. viii.

Hypostatic Union

and is denied by pantheists.[1] Expressed in dogmatic terms of the Councils, biblical induction establishes the conclusion that in Jesus Christ there are two natures, one truly divine and the other perfectly human, these natures being united inseparably, although without confusion or mutual interference, in one Person.[2] This means that the divine and human natures are the natures of one personal Subject or Ego — the eternal Son of God. Therefore, whether we designate Christ by divine or by human titles, we are speaking of one and the same Person; and we can rightly attribute to Him the proper attributes of either nature, although we may not ascribe the distinctive attributes of one to the other nature.[3]

A careful recollection of these truths of the Incarnation will serve to meet the objections to the biblical argument for the Trinity which are based upon the

[1] Unitarians to-day show a distinctly pantheistic tendency. They are sometimes willing to acknowledge that Christ is consubstantial with the Father, but with the assumption that such a description is applicable to all men. For an example, see J. M. Whiton, *Gloria Patri*, pp. 19–29.

[2] This is the doctrine of the Hypostatic Union, asserted by the third and fourth Ecumenical Councils. See St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.*, III. ii–v; Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, V. liv. 10; Darwell Stone, *Outlines of Christ. Dogma*, pp. 61–86.

[3] This is the doctrine of the communication of idioms. See St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, III. xvi; Hooker, *op. cit.*, V. lii. 3; liii. 3, 4; W. Bright, *St. Leo on the Incarn.*, pp. 117–119 (*Tome* of St. Leo, § 5); notes 5, 63; and the writer's *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 40–46. Lutheran theology subverts this doctrine into the theory that the attributes of one nature are communicated to the other nature. Some of our own writers have fallen into this really monophysite error.

numerous evidences in the Gospels that Jesus Christ was very Man, and subject in His human nature to all the proper limitations of a sinless manhood. These evidences are exceedingly precious to catholic believers, since they prove that the Only-begotten of God has really taken our nature, and has thus constituted Himself an effective Daysman and meeting-point between God and man. If, however, they are understood to prove that Christ was not really and fully God — whether because He had never been divine, or because He was deprived of some at least of His eternal attributes by His taking our nature,[1] — such an inference is inconsistent with the claims of Christ, and nullifies the New Testament teaching that in Him we have a true Mediator, who can lay His hands on both God and man.[2]

It is futile, therefore, to object that Christ is said to have advanced in wisdom as well as in stature, and in favour with God and men;[3] that He learned

[1] The kenotic theory above described.

[2] 1 Tim. ii. 5. Cf. Job ix. 33.

Replying to the objection that a Mediator between God and man cannot be one of the parties to be reconciled, Waterland says that the distinction of Persons in the Trinity shows that, although God, Christ is not the Person — *i.e.* the Father — to whom He mediates. See *Second Vindication*, pp. 567, 568. It might be added that, if valid, the objection would prove too much, for it would also militate against His being Man. Mediation is between persons; and the persons on both sides who are mediated between by Christ are distinct from Himself.

[3] St. Luke ii. 52. Cf. St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, III. 52; and the writer's *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 180–183.

from experience after the human manner; that He professed ignorance concerning the day and hour of the judgment;[1] that He exhibited a finite presence, coming where He had not been, and leaving; that He wrought miracles with prayer, as dependent upon divine assistance; that He was governed by the human law of obedience to the Father's will; that He felt forsaken of God on the Cross; that He acknowledged the Father to be His God;[2] and numerous other Gospel indications that His human limitations were not docetic but genuine.

The clue to them all is to be found in the truth of the Incarnation. The Son of God really took our nature, and all the limitations above referred to were involved in that fact. But we attribute them to Christ as touching the nature which He assumed.[3] His claim to be divine — a claim made during His humiliation — requires this method of interpretation, if we

[1] St. Mark xiii. 32. Cf. St. Athanasius, *op. cit.*, III. 42–50; the writer's *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 183–185.

[2] St. John xx. 17. St. Gregory Naz., *Theol. Orat.*, iv. 8, *init.*, explains those words as spoken by Christ in relation to His Manhood. See also St. Matt. xxvii. 46; Ephes. i. 17; Revel. iii. 2, 12; which are to be explained in the same way.

[3] The Arians made use of these predications of human limitations to Christ, and were answered by St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, III. 26 *et seq.* In III. 32, he says, "These things were so done, were so manifested, because He had a body, not in appearance, but in truth; and it became the Lord, in putting on human flesh, to put it on whole with the affections proper to it; that, as we say that the body was His own, so also we may say that the affections of the body were proper to Him alone, though they did not touch Him according to the Godhead."

are not to conclude that Christ's claims are false.[1] If they are false, He was not even the perfect man that He is generally acknowledged to be. He was God or else He was not good.

§ 3. Another form of objection to the biblical argument for the Trinity is based upon the subordinate manner in which Christ is reckoned in the New Testament to be divine. This difficulty has been partly met by anticipation in our previous chapter.[2] As Dr. Waterland has pointed out,[3] although the Son—and this is true of the Holy Spirit—is God in a subordinate manner, He is not God in an inferior sense of the word God.[4] That is, although the Godhead which the Son eternally possesses is the very Godhead of the Father, the manner of His having it is derivative and by eternal generation from the Father. This generation of the Son, and the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father through the Son, constitute an eternal order of Persons, in which the Father is first, the Son second, and the Spirit third. But since the generation and the procession are eternal, this order is not one of temporal sequence; and since the Godhead which is possessed

[1] On the *a priori* objection that Christ cannot be God if He is Man, see § 13, below.

[2] Ch. iv. § 16. On the doctrine of subordination in history, see ch. iii. §§ 8, 12, above. The doctrine is explained in ch. vii. § 8, below.

[3] *Second Vindication of Christ's Divinity* (*Works*, Vol. II), p. 525.

[4] On our Lord's words, "The Father is greater than I" (St. John xiv. 28), see pp. 154, 155, below.

by all three of the divine Persons is one and undivided, these Persons are co-equal in essence as well as co-eternal.

Regard for the divine unity, and for the mystery of generation and procession, explains the habit of New Testament writers of ascribing divine attributes and titles to the Son and to the Holy Spirit in a manner that witnesses to the *principatus* of the Father. But in describing Them as divine they exclude the interpretation which relegates Them to an inferior rank in being. The notion of inferior gods is utterly foreign to New Testament doctrine; so that, although the manner in which the Son and the Holy Spirit are taught to be God is subordinate, the teaching that they *are* God can have but one meaning — that they possess the one and indivisible Godhead, and are co-eternal and co-equal with the Father.[1]

§ 4. A somewhat related objection is based upon the numerous passages in which the Son and the Holy Spirit are described as sent, and as performing Their ministrations in obedience to the Father's will.[2] But so far from being really inconsistent with the doctrine of the Trinity, these passages illustrate and

[1] Instances are given in p. 139, note 4, above.

[2] On the Son's mission, see St. Matt. x. 40; St. Mark ix. 37; St. Luke iv. 18, 43; ix. 48; x. 16; St. John iii. 17; v. 30; vi. 57; viii. 42; x. 36; xii. 49; xvii. 3. On that of the Spirit, St. John xiv. 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7.

The obedience of Christ may be explained not only by the considerations about to be given, but also, in many passages, by His Incarnation and acceptance in the Manhood of human limitations. See § 2, above.

confirm a mystery which in catholic theology constitutes an important adjunct of trinitarian doctrine — the mystery of divine economies and divine mission.[1] The operative manifestations of the divine Persons are necessarily to be apprehended and described in the terms of finite experience, and the terms employed are also chosen in view of the mutual relations in eternal procession of the divine Persons. These Persons are all said to come into the world; but God does not, in His Godhead, move through space. He does, however, manifest Himself through the spatial and temporal conditions of our experience, and these manifestations, from our point of view, are conveniently and not misleadingly described in terms of coming. To describe the Son and the Holy Spirit as sent into the world, however, implies that Their coming is in obedience to the will of another Person; and this practical subordination has been thought by some to be inconsistent with Their being reckoned as divine and co-equal with the Father.

But it is surely not impossible for co-equal persons to work together in a relation of subordination; and such subordination, while it favours unity in work, does not in the slightest degree militate against the co-equality of those who thus choose to act. If the divine Persons are one in essence, They of course operate indivisibly in all things; but, as will be expounded more fully in a subsequent chapter,[2]

[1] See ch. viii. §§ 1–4, below.
[2] Ch. viii. § 1.

Their being distinct Persons involves a difference in the relations of each of Them to Their common operations. There is but one will of God, but the relations of distinct divine Persons to that will must themselves be distinct, and will properly correspond to the mutual relations of these Persons — that is, to the eternal order of Persons in the Godhead. And the passages of Scripture which we are considering simply bear witness to these relations in the terms of their manifestation in human history. Since the Son proceeds from the Father eternally, His being sent by the Father fittingly expresses His relation to the mystery of redemption which the Father and the Son equally achieve. And since the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father through the Son, His relation to the mystery of sanctification, wrought by the undivided Trinity, is suitably described by His being said to be sent by the Father and the Son.

§ 5. There remain to be noticed a few other texts which, when interpreted without regard for the rest of Scripture, and apart from their context, lend themselves to antitrinitarian argument.

A certain passage in the *Book of Proverbs* was discussed at length between the Arians and the orthodox. Wisdom is there personified; and, in the Septuagint version which the ancient fathers used, is represented as saying, "The Lord made, ἔκτισε, Me, in the beginning of His way, before, εἰς, His works of old."[1] The passage was generally regarded

[1] Prov. viii. 22.

as messianic; and when thus translated, it seems to bear out the Arian contention that Christ there declares Himself to have been created. Some catholic writers distinguished between the Greek words κτίζειν and ποιεῖν, and interpreted the text as referring to the eternal generation. Others interpreted ἔκτισε as equivalent to ἐπέστησε τοῖς ἔργοις. St. Athanasius referred it to our Lord's human nature.[1] All agreed that the passage ought to be interpreted by its context, which plainly declares the personified Wisdom to be from everlasting.[2] That is, there was no time when He was not. The original Hebrew for ἔκτισε would have settled the controversy. קנה means possessed, and the translation should be, "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way."[3]

In the Psalms it is said, "The Lord said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee."[4] This passage is messianic in its reference. Our Lord's being born of a woman, in fact the whole mystery of

[1] *C. Arian.*, II. xvi–xxii. The same interpretation is to be found in St. Gregory Naz., *Theol. Orat.*, iv. 2. He says, "Whatever we find joined with a cause" — he refers to temporal causation — "we are to refer to the Manhood; but all that is absolute and unoriginate we are to reckon to the account of His Godhead." The same point is made by St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, II. xix. 47.

[2] Verse 23.

[3] On this text, see D. Waterland, *Second Vindication*, pp. 633–643; Liddon, *op. cit.*, pp. 60–62; Newman, *Select Treatises*, Vol. II. pp. 270, 271; R. L. Ottley, *Incarnation*, Vol. I. p. 305, esp. note 3.

[4] Psa. ii. 7. Cited by St. Paul, Acts xiii. 33, who elsewhere says, Rom. i. 4, "declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection of the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord." Cited also in Heb. i. 5; v. 5. See Waterland, *Works*, Vol. IV. p. 26.

His manifestation culminating in the resurrection, is treated as a begetting of the Son as touching the Manhood.[1] The passage has no reference to the origin of His Person. With it should be compared the annunciation of the angel to the Blessed Virgin, "That which is to be born of thee shall be called holy, the Son of God."[2] The thought is that *men* shall call Him so, in view of the supernatural causation of His human birth, — not that His divine sonship then begins to be.

Elsewhere in the Psalms it is said, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated wickedness: Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."[3] With this should be compared St. Peter's language on the day of Pentecost, "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified";[4] also St. Paul's words to the Philippians, "Wherefore also God

[1] Four uses of the word generation and its cognates in relation to the Son, are to be found in biblical and theological literature: (*a*) referring to His eternal derivation from the Father: *e.g.* St. John i. 14, 18; (*b*) to His going forth to create: in connection with λόγος προφορικός of ancient writers; (*c*) to His Incarnation: St. Matt. i. 16; (*d*) to His resurrection, whereby He became the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. viii. 29), the firstborn from the dead (Col. i. 18; Revel. i. 5). Cf. p. 223, below, where other references are given.

[2] St. Luke i. 35.

[3] Psa. xlv. 7. Cf. Zech. xiii. 9: where God describes Christ as "the Man that is My Fellow." The text is discussed by St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, I. xii.

[4] Acts ii. 36.

highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow,"[1] etc. In all these the subject is the Word as incarnate. He who was all along in the Form of God is now, by virtue of His obedience as man, exalted in His Manhood, is anointed above His human brethren, is made Lord in His flesh as well as in His eternal nature, and His human name Jesus is exalted above all. His possessing the Godhead from eternity is not in any way excluded by such teaching.

Our Lord says to an impulsive enquirer, "Why callest thou Me good? None is good save one, even God.[2] But such words do not necessarily imply that the young man erred in calling Christ good, and the moral claims which Christ advanced on other occasions[3] forbid this interpretation. It is a reasonable view that our Lord was challenging the implication with which the young man had called Him good—that He was a mere rabbi,—and was inviting an acknowledgment of His higher claim.[4]

St. Paul describes our Lord as "the Firstborn of all creation";[5] and the ancient Arians interpreted

[1] Phil. ii. 9–11.

[2] St. Mark x. 18. Cf. St. Matt. xix. 17; St. Luke xviii. 19.

[3] "Which of you convicteth Me of sin": St. John viii. 46. On the dilemma, God or not good, see ch. iv. § 12, above.

[4] See Nolloth, *Pers. of our Lord*, p. 224, note 2. We have given the patristic interpretation. For a different one, also consistent with Christ's divine claim, see H. B. Swete, *St. Mark* x. 18; and A. Plummer, *St. Luke* xviii. 18, 19.

[5] Col. i. 15: πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως.

this to mean that He was the earliest of creatures. The passage has its difficulties, and various interpretations have been offered by orthodox exegetes. But the context forbids the Arian interpretation, which is also inconsistent with St. Paul's general teaching. In the context he says that in Christ "all things consist,"[1] which would be impossible if Christ were a creature. The term πρωτότοκος is employed to signify heirship and sovereignty, and Lightfoot takes St. Paul to mean that Christ is Heir and Lord of all creation.[2]

Our Lord's words, "My Father is greater than I," have been interpreted as referring to His incarnate status.[3] But if they are taken as expressing a superiority of the Father to the Son in the Trinity,[4] this is not necessarily inconsistent with the co-equality in essence of the Father and the Son. Rather it is to be taken as bearing witness to the truth which has been defined in a previous section, that, by reason of the eternal generation, the manner in which the Son possesses the indivisible Godhead of the Father

[1] Verse 17.

[2] *Epistles of St. Paul to the Coloss. and Philemon*, pp. 144–8. Cf. p. 123, note 4, above. See also Newman, *Select Treatises*, Vol. II. pp. 449–462, on the patristic explanations. Abbott, *in loc.*, interprets the clause as meaning "begotten before all creation," the only ideas involved being "priority in time" and distinction from the genus κτίσις.

[3] In St. Leo's *Tome*, and in the Athanasian Creed, "Inferior to the Father as touching His Manhood."

[4] By several Greek fathers. St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, I. xiii. 58; St. Gregory Naz., *Theol. Orat.*, iv. 7. On patristic views at large, see Petavius, *de Trin.*, II. ii.

is derivative and subordinate.[1] The Son is also subordinate to the Father in the economic dispensation of divine operations.[2] The general tenor of our Lord's teaching concerning Himself does not permit us to take Him here to mean that there is a difference in essential rank of being between Himself and the Father.

§ 6. The space at our command has not permitted an exhaustive presentation either of the scriptural data upon which our induction is based or of the alleged contrary evidence. But we believe that our argument, and the principles thereby established, have been sufficiently comprehensive to justify the conclusion that, whereas the so-called antitrinitarian passages are one and all capable of being harmonized with the trinitarian hypothesis, no other hypothesis can be shown to agree with the general and constructive teaching of Scripture.

Our conclusion is that no one can do justice to the teaching of supernatural revelation as it is contained in Holy Scripture without accepting the scripturalness of the catholic doctrine of the Trinity. The Scriptures plainly teach (*a*) that there is but one God, one divine Being; (*b*) that three distinct Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are truly and equally divine, and subsist in the indivisible unity of God;

[1] In the passage above referred to, St. Gregory Naz. says that "the 'greater' refers to origination, while the equal belongs to the nature." Cf. § 3, above.

[2] Cf. § 4, above.

(*c*) that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father, being also the Spirit of the Son, so that, although these Persons are really God and co-equal with the Father, the manner of their being God is subordinate to that of the Father; (*d*) that the divine Persons are so united by their possession of one Godhead that they exist in each other; and (*e*) that a certain economic distribution of external operations, and a supremacy of the Father's will, is discernible in the manifestations of the divine Persons in history — this corresponding in the temporal sphere to the eternal order of the Persons, and appearing to grow out of it.

II. *Rational*

§ 7. Each one of the five particulars of biblical teaching as above summarized constitutes an intelligible proposition, and one that is capable of being conveyed to humble understandings. Their implicit acceptance at large, and a belief in each, severally considered, so far as the individual mind has learned to distinguish them, is sufficient for the practical purposes of Christian living; and it is such acceptance by countless millions of believers in many ages that has in fact determined the fundamental thought, the practical ideals, and the worship of the catholic Christian world since pentecostal days. Three Persons have been served and worshipped as God, and in the manner required by the eternal and the economic

relations between them which we have defined. Yet monotheism is the fundamental postulate of Christian belief, thought, and life. This antithesis of beliefs has not disturbed the coherent unity of Christian ideals; and Christians in general have not been conscious of mental self-stultification in worshipping "one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity."

If difficulties have been felt, they have arisen in the sphere of speculative theology, not in that of working application to life. Revelation teaches us several distinct and mysterious truths concerning God. This teaching is sufficient in range and definiteness for our practical guidance, but does not afford us sufficient knowledge, either of the particulars revealed or of the deeper mysteries by which their mutual harmony can be explained, to enable us to construct a complete rational theory of God.[1] Consequently, when men have tried to develop such a theory they have been baffled, and have been tempted either to sacrifice one

[1] The ancient fathers were keenly alive to the mysteriousness and ineffability of the divine essence, and confessed the inadequacy, while maintaining the truth, of the terms whereby the Church has summarized the contents of revelation. Cf. St. Gregory Naz., *Theol. Orat.*, II. 17 *et seq.*

The language given by A. V. G. Allen, *Continuity of Christ. Thought*, p. 429, note, represents a dogmatic rationalism which finds no echo in genuine catholic theology: "Why should we not, if we are made in God's own image, attempt to unravel the interior workings of the divine nature? If we have abandoned the traditional misconception of the Trinity, why must we be forbidden to define the doctrine in some truer formula? Is the use of reason to be confined to those ingenious persons who are fond of enigmas?"

or other of the particulars of revelation or to reject scriptural teaching, as involving hopeless contradiction. No effort to disprove the scripturalness of the doctrine of the Trinity has ever been able to establish its validity among Christian thinkers at large.[1]

In reckoning with the rational difficulties which attend the doctrine of the Trinity we acknowledge explicitly that we cannot solve the fundamental problems which it raises.[2] But this fact does not deter us from believing. The reason why it does not is that our knowledge of the personality of God — of the manner of divine personal subsistence — must be obtained, if at all, from supernatural revelation, and the contents of such revelation, when perceived to be genuine, must determine our convictions. If problems are thus raised which we cannot solve, this is to be expected, because of the finite limitations of our reason and knowledge; and therefore their emergence does not warrant a rejection of any of the indubitable particulars of revelation.

What in the meanwhile materially helps us to face the problems referred to without disturbance of mind is the practical and working value of the doctrine of

[1] The facility with which modern unitarians reject such portions of Scripture as are inconsistent with their position illustrates this.

[2] The chief of these problems are, How can three personal Selfs exist in and possess one indivisible essence and nature? and How can one Person be eternally derived from another — so derived, that is, that the two Persons involved are co-eternal together? These questions require for their answer a knowledge of infinity and eternity which finite minds are incapable of acquiring.

the Trinity. So far from reducing our ideals of life to confusion, it gives them a coherent unity and satisfying value which is wanting to the ideals deduced from any other doctrine of God that men have ever tried to apply to life. The difficulties attendant upon trinitarianism are purely theoretical. They arise from efforts to solve problems which are beyond human capacity to solve. They do not emerge in practically applying the doctrine of the Trinity to daily life.

The effort to search into the deep things of God is not in itself to be blamed, but is inevitable among those who seek to attain to an intelligent faith. The mistake of rationalists lies in refusing to believe the contents of revelation, except so far as they are able to establish them on grounds of natural experience and reason, and can solve the problems which they raise.[1] It is indeed undeniable that, if an alleged content of revelation appears to be contradictory to other propositions which are known to be true, we are justified in refusing to believe such teaching, and to reject its claim to be divinely revealed, that is, until we are shown this at least, that what has seemed to be a contradiction can reasonably be regarded as merely a gap in our knowledge, or a limitation in our understanding. It is from such a point of view that we shall reckon with the chief rational objections to the doctrine of the Trinity: — acknowledging that the plea of mystery is not adequate to justify the

[1] On rationalism, see *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. iv. § 3.

maintenance of propositions which can be proved to be mutually contradictory; but refusing to admit that the presence of unsolved problems is a sufficient reason for rejecting the propositions by which they are raised.[1]

§ 8. (*a*) It is objected that the doctrine of the Trinity is unintelligible, because hopelessly unrelated to human experience. There are no finite analogies to the existence of three persons in one being, and finite experience alone affords the terms in which any proposition can be made intelligible to us.

It must be acknowledged that every attempt to illustrate the Trinity by finite analogies has resulted in failure, when these analogies have been assumed to be adequate by those who have employed them. The ancient fathers made large use of certain illustrations, but as a rule they did so with explicit acknowledgment of their inadequacy.[2] Every analogy and every term which is used in describing the Three in One is symbolic, and not less so when successfully employed to convey truth to the mind. But the same

[1] On the rational grounds of, and difficulties raised by, the doctrine of the Trinity, see St. Athanasius, *c. Arianos, passim;* St. Gregory Nyss., *c. Eunomium;* St. Augustine, *de Trinitate;* St. Anselm, *Monologium*, chh. xxix–lxiv; St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. xxvii *et seq.*; Waterland, *Works, passim;* Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, §§ 101–105, 109; Illingworth, *Doc. of the Trinity, Apologetically Considered; Personality, Human and Divine;* "How We May Think of the Trinity," by Robert Vaughan, in *Church Quarterly Rev.*, April, 1910.

[2] On analogies and illustrations in revelation and theology, see ch. viii. §§ 8–10, below. Cf. Newman, *Select Treatises*, Vol. II. pp. 173–177.

law holds good in all departments of theology. Every thing which we say concerning God, if it is rightly said, is symbolically to be understood. This does not mean that it is a kind of algebraic x which stands for an unknown quantity. It means rather that the knowledge which such terms and analogies express is finite, and cannot be described except in the terms of finite experience. That the knowledge of God must be infinite in order to be real is one of the mistaken assumptions of philosophical agnosticism, an assumption which has been considered in another volume.[1] It is possible to have a finite conception of the Infinite, and to formulate such conception, without error, in finite terms. The mistake in this direction lies in supposing that our conceptions and terms are adequate to reality. Inadequacy of language does not of itself mean inaccuracy or untruth.

The cause of difficulty is usually an attempt to imagine God, it being assumed that what we cannot imagine we cannot conceive. The several propositions which are contained in the doctrine of the Trinity are one and all intelligible. That God is one is both intelligible and an accepted postulate of modern theism. That there are three divine Persons is also an intelligible proposition, and countless millions understand its meaning. That God is one in Being, and three in personal subsistence, is likewise an assertion the meaning of which is well understood.[2]

[1] *Being and Attributes of God*, ch. ii.

[2] See Waterland, *Second Vindication*, pp. 709–714.

What is not understood is the manner in which it is possible for three personal egos to possess one being and Godhead. But that is an incidental problem, the answer to which is no part of the doctrine, and of which we shall soon have more to say.

What now requires attention is that we cannot form a picture or mental image of three persons co-existing in one indivisible essence, because no finite analogies afford us the necessary materials for such an image. But we can form no image of God in any case, for He does not come within the category of figurable beings. Yet, just as we conceive, and symbolically express, many things which are not in their nature imaginable — our own finite spirits afford examples, — so we are warranted in asserting propositions concerning God, based upon His economic self-manifestation to us, which although intelligible are unimaginable, that is, unpicturable to the mind. We cannot mentally picture three divine Persons in one Godhead; but since we cannot thus picture God in any view that we can rightly take of Him, this affords no reason for rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, unless it also requires us to declare God to be unknowable altogether. This last conclusion is fatal to any form of Christian theism.

The conclusion of the matter is that the co-existence of three divine Persons in one divine essence and Being is neither more nor less intelligible than the existence of a personal Infinite. Both ideas are intelligible, or we should not be able, as we are, to express them in

propositions the meaning of which is understood.[1] But both ideas raise insoluble problems, and both lie outside the sphere of concrete imagination.

§ 9. (*b*) The problem which is most directly suggested by the doctrine of the Trinity is concerned with the manner in which it is possible for three Persons to co-exist in the one indivisible essence of God. Christian theologians confess their inability to solve this problem; but, for the reason mentioned a few pages back, this inability is not regarded by sound theologians as a proof that they ought to reject the divinely revealed doctrine by which the problem is raised.

It has been urged, however, that the problem is insoluble because nonsensical. To assert that one God subsists in three Persons, it is objected, is self-contradictory, and equivalent to declaring that three beings are one being.[2] All the analogies of experience,

[1] When antitrinitarians declare these propositions to be mutually inconsistent — an objection about to be reckoned with — they plainly imply that they understand them sufficiently at least to perceive their mutual opposition. All that we can assert as to unintelligible propositions is their unintelligibility.

Robert Vaughan, *Church Quarterly Rev.*, April, 1910, pp. 136, 137, calls attention to the fact that men constantly act upon the basis of implicit beliefs which they neither do nor need to formulate.

[2] The axiom is advanced, "Things identical with the same thing are identical with each other." This axiom is really inapplicable. It is not taught that three persons *are* one essence, but that they *exist in* and *possess* one essence, being the subjects or Selfs of that essence. The divine essence has three personal subjects, and these subjects or *personae* differ in the manner in which they exist in and possess the one essence.

it is further said, confirm the truth of the law that every person constitutes a separate individual; so that to assert the existence of three divine Persons is to declare that there are three divine Beings.

Whatever may be the intrinsic force of this objection,[1] it has a certain plausibility and has seemed to many modern writers to be unanswerable. The explanation of this, however, does not lie in the validity of the objection — it has no validity whatever, — but partly in a failure to take the term person in the sense in which it is actually employed in the doctrine of the Trinity, and partly in the fallacy of determining the necessities of divine personality by the analogies of finite experience.

Whether the term person is suitable for describing the three "somewhats" that Scripture teaches to exist in the Godhead is a question which does not require an answer in this connection. The fact is that theology has appropriated it for such use, and has employed it for many ages in a determinate and distinctively theological sense. This sense is to be ascertained neither by psychological analysis of human personality, nor by appeal either to etymology or to philosophy. It is to be discovered by studying the history of the word in catholic theology. Like many other terms, personality has various meanings;

[1] On this objection, see St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. xxx, xxxi; Newman, *Select Treatises*, Vol. II. pp. 315–325; Perrone, *Praelec. de Trin.*, cap. ii. prop. iv; Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, § 109; Franzelin, *de Deo Trino*, pp. 299–303.

and confusion of thought must result from criticising a proposition in which it is used with one meaning as if it were employed in another.

The term will be more fully discussed in our next chapter. So far as the objection which we are considering is concerned, it is sufficient to say that the term is suggested by the reciprocal use of pronouns in Holy Scripture as between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and *positively* means, when applied to Them, that They are distinct selfs, αὐτοί, or egos. *Negatively*, and by reason of the teaching of both Church and Scripture as to divine unity, it does not signify separate individuals, but selfs of one and the same individual and divine Being.[1] The term was crystallized in its positive meaning of real self by the conflict with Sabellianism, and in its exclusion of separation, as between different beings, by the Arian conflict and by the acceptance of the *homoousion* terminology. As thus crystallized and employed, it expresses neither more nor less than that wherein the New Testament plainly implies that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct, all being truly divine.

The term has other uses in other departments of thought and speech; and in ordinary modern use it necessarily implies, if it does not signify, complete

[1] On the error of identifying the meaning of "person" and "being" as used in trinitarian doctrine, see Waterland, *Vindication of Christ's Divinity*, Qq. xxii, xxiii; and *Second Vindication*, Qq. xxii, xxiii. Cf. Wm. Beveridge, *Works*, Vol. II. p. 4 (Anglo-Cath. Lib.).

and separate individuality. Of course, if the word person has such meaning in the doctrine of the Trinity, that doctrine is self-contradictory. Three complete and separate individuals cannot be described as one indivisible being. But, and this is the answer to the objection which we are considering, the theological proposition that three divine Persons co-exist in the one indivisible God neither means nor implies that three separate individuals are one being. It means only that three divine Selfs exist in, and possess, the indivisible Godhead, without either separation or confusion. Such doctrine is not self-contradictory, for it does not, as is objected, declare three persons to be one person, or three beings to be one being.[1]

§ 10. It is time to consider the other cause of the impression that the doctrine of the Trinity is self-contradictory — that is, the fallacy of measuring the possibilities of divine personality by what we observe in human personality. It is this fallacy which leads writers to assert that three selfs cannot exist in one divine Being. There is no foundation for such an assertion except an illicit extension of the laws of human and finite personality to divine and infinite personality. Because we never find more than one real self in one human being, it does not follow that

[1] R. C. Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, p. 155, says, "The personal distinction in Godhead is a distinction within, and of, unity: not a distinction which qualifies unity, or usurps the place of it, or destroys it."

only one self can exist in the one divine Being.[1] It does not follow even that God is unable, if He so wills, to create finite beings possessed of a plurality of selfs.[2] No doubt such creatures would be unsuited to the conditions of this world, and their being actually brought into existence by God is incredible. But this is aside from the point, which is that the law which is observed to prevail among human persons does not afford an adequate basis for dogmatism as to the possibilities of personal existence in spheres that lie beyond the range of our experience.[3] This law merely describes what has been invariably experienced in the human sphere. It has no other validity than that of a correct description of experience in a certain field. It neither proves what *must* happen in the human sphere, nor enables us to determine the possibilities and actualities of divine personality.

[1] In discussing analogies between human and divine persons we must use the word person in the same sense in both terms of comparison. That is, we must compare selfs, as such, and as distinguished from all that the several selfs possess.

[2] As if the Siamese twins, remaining two selfs or egos, were to possess not only one external frame, but one physical organism and one soul.

[3] H. Lotze, *Microcosmus* (4th edit. Eng. trans.) Vol. II. p. 685, says, "The course of development of philosophic thought has put us who live in this age in the position of being obliged to show that the conditions of personality which we meet in finite things are not lacking to the Infinite; whereas the natural concatenation of the matter under discussion would lead us to show that of the full personality which is possible only for the Infinite a feeble reflection is given also to the finite."

Our discussion brings us to the conclusion that neither by reason of the terms employed, when these terms are correctly understood, nor because of any established necessities of personality, can the trinitarian doctrine of three Persons in one God be shown to be self-contradictory.

It is indeed, as has been acknowledged, impossible for us to determine how three persons can exist in one being. But we ought to add that it is also impossible to determine how even one person can be made to exist in, and control, a lump of matter, such as the human body. None but materialists are deterred by this mystery from accepting the evidence that, in fact, personality does exist in and govern the human frame.[1] Similarly we ought not to be deterred by the problems of the Trinity from accepting the truth of what has been revealed concerning it.

Our argument presupposes, of course, that the alleged revelations of God contained in Scripture are really divine and true. On no other basis is it possible either to prove or to disprove the tri-personal subsistence of God. Neither experience nor reason, apart from supernatural revelation, enables us to determine such a question. In saying this we do not forget that the tri-personality of God, when once ascertained and carefully reckoned with, can rationally be shown to relieve theistic doctrine of a difficulty that has driven some unitarian theists to surrender

[1] Materialists regard personality as merely a name for certain functions of matter — of the brain.

even the most elementary belief in the personality of God. But this subject will be taken up in subsequent chapters.[1]

§ 11. (*c*) In the fourth century Arius urged the objection that, if Christ is Son, He must be later in time than His Father, and there must have been a time when He was not. The lofty place which Arius gave to the Word was after all the place of a mere creature, a being infinitely below the Father in essential rank. The same logic, if it is sound, is applicable to the Holy Spirit. If He is the Spirit as proceeding from the Father, then the Arian method of argument will lead us to infer that He also is later in time than the Father, and so on. Such conclusions are clearly contrary to the doctrine of the Trinity, which teaches that the three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are "co-eternal together and co-equal."

The Arian logic is formally sound, if its major premise is true. But this premise is untrue, and the logic of Arius is therefore vitiated by a material fallacy.[2] His major premise is that our Lord is Son by temporal generation. If He were this, He would of course be later in time than the Father who begat Him. But the generation of the Son, and the procession of the Spirit, are not temporal processes or events, but eternal facts of the divine essence, which

[1] Chh. vi. § 11; vii. § 2; ix. § 6.

[2] See J. B. Mozley, *Development*, pp. 41–43, on the heretical results of relying on formal logic.

transcend and are independent of time sequences.[1] The fact that the Word is Son does not, therefore, involve the inference that He is later in time than His Father and a creature.[2]

§ 12. (*d*) It is objected, however, that if the Son and the Holy Spirit owe their existence to generation and spiration from the Father, they cannot be said to be self-existent, even though their origin be described as eternal. If they are not self-existent they are not truly God.

This is really a question of terms. Self-existence can only mean an eternal existence the grounds of which are within one's being. The being of God is but one, and it is eternally possessed by the Son and by the Holy Spirit as well as by the Father. This being has no cause, so that its eternal possession makes its possessor self-existent. Nothing else is meant by calling the Son and the Holy Spirit self-existent. The generation and the procession are not, in the temporal and ætiological sense of terms, beginnings or creations of existence, but eternal facts in a self-existent Being. The Father is that Being, the Son is that Being, and the Holy Spirit is that Being; and the generation and the procession describe — not their coming into existence, but — the manner in which each is the self-existent God.[3]

[1] On divine processions, see ch. vii. § 3, below.

[2] This was the answer of St. Athanasius and other ancient fathers. For references, see p. 79, note 1, above.

[3] Cf. St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.*, I, xxvii. 2, *ad tert.;* Waterland, *Second Vindication*, pp. 545–547.

§ 13. (*e*) The objection has frequently been felt, and sometimes expressed, that the difference in kind between the infinite and the finite precludes any union of divine fulness and human attributes in one person.[1] If therefore, Christ was really human, and subject to human limitations, He could not have been divine — the second Person in the indivisible Godhead. The divine attributes, it is said, are incompatible with finite limitations.[2] Ancient rationalists shrank from the thought that the very Godhead and the very manhood could be united in one and the same person. Rather than believe that such an union had occurred in Christ, they either regarded the human aspects of our Lord's life as unreal — the docetic heresy — or minimized and even denied His Divinity. In modern days this belief in the incompatibility of the Godhead and the Manhood has given rise to various forms of kenoticism — the theory that in order really to submit to human limitations the Son of God surrendered such divine attributes and powers as were inconsistent with these limitations.[3] It ought to be clear to one

[1] The Jews accused our Lord of blasphemy, "because Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God": St. John x. 33. Reville, *Liberal Christianity*, pp. 114, 115, says, "As soon as Jesus is looked upon as the incarnation of God . . . all that remains is a supernatural being," incapable of being given a place in human history.

[2] This objection is an *a priori* counterpart of the biblical objection considered in § 2, above, that the Gospels show Christ to have been very man.

[3] Dr. Du Bose, *Gospel in St. Paul*, p. 9, says, "God was in Christ *sub specie hominis*, not *Dei*." Did we not know that that writer acknowledges the true divinity of Christ, we might reasonably infer

who is not confused by the irrelevant considerations and disputable exegesis by which the kenotic theory is supported that, if Christ was not possessed of the Godhead in its fulness during His earthly life, the doctrine of the Trinity was not then true, for there were not three co-equal Persons in the Godhead. A person who does not possess all the proper attributes of the Godhead cannot be regarded as co-equal with one who does.[1]

The point of the objection which we are considering is the alleged incompatibility between divine attributes and human limitations, regarded as possessed by one person. If it is valid, Christ cannot be equal with God, except on docetic premises which modern thinkers at least cannot accept. And this conclusion must be adopted, if at all, in relation to every sphere to which it is applicable. It is the finite limitations which inhere in human nature as human that involve the alleged incompatibility, and they cannot be eliminated from the Manhood of Christ while it remains a really human nature. Its glorification has wondrously enhanced its conditions and powers, but unless it is no longer human, the finiteness of its conditions and powers remains. Accordingly, if acceptance of the finite limitations of the manhood excludes a possession by the same Person of the fulness of divine power, knowledge and presence,

from such language that he regarded Christ as simply a human person to whom God imparted Himself in finite measure.

[1] Cf. the writer's *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 221–224.

Christ in glory ought not to be regarded as truly God by one who believes that He continues to have a real Manhood.[1] The objection, it can be seen, is radical. If Christ at any time is really man, He cannot at that time be very God. Surely one who is not always God is never God; and if Christ is not God, the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is untrue.

The alleged incompatibility does not exist, unless we suppose that the incarnate state involves a commingling of divine and human attributes in one nature;[2] and the true doctrine of the Incarnation forbids such a supposition. This is the gist of our reply. The Incarnation was not an imparting of the divine nature to the human, nor was it a "conversion of the Godhead into flesh;" but "a taking of the manhood into God"—into the Person of one who eternally possesses the Godhead. Thus in Christ there is a hypostatic union of the two natures in one Person, but no mixture or confusion between them. Each nature continues to observe its own laws of operation, and one ego is the ego of both. There is no mutual infringement, and the limitations of the lower nature are not reduced to unreality by the infinitude of the higher one.

If it be replied that no explanation can be made which will enable us to see how the divine and human natures can at once be the natures of one ego without mutual commingling and interference, the rejoinder

[1] See *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 152, 153.

[2] Cf. p. 143, note 1, above.

which we make is that neither are we able to show that a divine Ego cannot possess two natures in this manner. The whole subject of the hypostatic union of the Godhead and the Manhood in one Christ without confusion and without separation is beyond our explaining. Its having actually taken place is acknowledged because no other doctrine can be made to accord with the phenomena of our Lord's earthly life, and with His claims.

We conclude that no objections have been made or can be made that justify our rejection of the concurrent teaching of the Church and of Holy Scripture that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, these Persons being distinct; and yet that they are but one God.

CHAPTER VI

PERSONALITY AND RELATED TERMS

I. *In Traditional Theology*

§ 1. The terms employed by catholic theology in defining the doctrine of the Trinity are borrowed from non-theological sources and have had various uses and meanings. But if we are to obtain a correct understanding of this doctrine, we must ascertain the particular use and meaning of each of these terms in theology. This is obviously determined in each case by the history of doctrine rather than by either the etymological meaning or non-theological usage.

We have investigated the history of the development of trinitarian terminology in our third chapter. It is desirable at this point, however, to resume the subject for the purpose of defining the primary terms of trinitarian doctrine. The most important of these terms is person. This and its equivalents are determinative of all the rest.[1]

[1] It will not be necessary, except in a few critical connections, to give again the references supplied in ch. iii, above. But the reader will find helpful hints supporting the positions here taken in H. C. Powell, *Prin. of the Incarn.*, pp. 143–178; Illingworth, *Personality*. Lecs. iii, iv; R. C. Ottley, *Incarnation*, Vol. II. pp. 252–259.

§ 2. The word person[1] comes from the Latin *persona*, which originally signified (1) a mask used by an actor on the stage. It came to mean (2) a character or part either assumed in the drama, *dramatis persona*, or sustained in actual life. It was also used to denote (3) a party at law, conceived of as the subject of rights and duties — a use which, as we shall see, lent itself to theological purposes. From such uses the transition was easily made to the notions of (4) an individual human being; and of (5) such a being in distinction from irrational animals and inanimate things. In philosophy this last use is technicalized, and a person is defined as a self-conscious or rational being. Such a definition comprehends a self or ego and a rational nature of which the self is the subject. And the term person is employed to signify each of these realities, so as to mean respectively (6) the natural and characteristic properties and observable traits of a self — a meaning akin to (2); — and (7) the self, as distinguished from all of which it is the subject. This last meaning is latent in the third or forensic use above defined.

§ 3. It was this forensic use which lent itself to Tertullian's purpose of vindicating the distinction of persons in the Godhead as against Patripassianism.[2] The substance of his thought is that there are three Parties who have equal possession of the fulness of

[1] A useful summary of various meanings of "person" is given in Murray's *New English Dic.*, *q.v.*

[2] Cf. ch. iii. § 6, above.

divine substance and attributes. What these Parties are in themselves he nowhere defines.[1] The forensic use of the term person involves no such definition. A party at law is a subject of rights and duties, the owner of property, etc.[2] In himself he may be a "natural" person, that is, a human being, or an "artificial" person, that is, a corporation.[3] In any case, so far as legal parlance involves definition, he is a self simply, who is capable of rights and duties. Similarly, Tertullian's use of the term to signify the three divine possessors of the indivisible substance of God involved no fuller definition of these Persons in themselves than this: — that they are distinct selfs who in common possess the divine substance and nature. Such a use of the term *persona* does not include in its necessary connotation the ideas involved in modern popular and philosophical usage. The thought of a self which possesses something in common with other selfs does not, except by appeal to human analogies, involve the notion of substantial separation from other selfs; and this notion is excluded by Tertullian's application of the term to the possessors of one divine substance. An appeal to human analogies cannot determine the meaning or requirements of selfhood in God.

St. Augustine completed the development of Ter-

[1] What ego or self is *in se* was not a subject of investigation among the ancients. See Powell, *op. cit.*, pp. 143–145.

[2] Baldwin, *Dic. of Philos.*, *s. v.* "Person (in law)."

[3] *Ibid.;* Blackstone, *Commentaries*, Bk. I. ch. i. p. 123.

tullian's terminology, and in doing so emphasized the necessity of limiting the implications of the term person in trinitarian doctrine. It stands, according to this writer, for three mysterious "somewhats" in God;[1] and we cannot rightly make the term signify in theology more than is necessarily involved in the scriptural distinction between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This brings us back again to the thought of three divine Selfs, who receive proper names, are distinguished by a reciprocal use of pronouns, and are all acknowledged to be proper Subjects of divine predications, although such predications pertain to but one indivisible Being. St. Augustine's trinitarian terminology still holds its own in Western theology; and his acknowledgment of three *personae* in the one divine *substantia* means in effect no more than that three ineffable Selfs subsist in and possess the one indivisible essence and nature of God.

§ 4. The ancient Greek equivalent for *persona*[2] was πρόσωπον, face or visage; and like *persona* it was sometimes employed to signify the divine Persons. But the Sabellians employed it in its etymological meaning in connection with their theory

[1] He was keenly alive to the inadequacy of the term *persona*, and to the impossibility of finding an adequate term. See *de Trin.*, v. 10; vii. 7–9; viii. 1. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. xxix., warns us that the term is applied to God in a more excellent sense than to man. Cf. Ottley, *op. cit.*, pp. 252, 253; Jas. Orr, *Side Lights on Christ. Doctrine*, pp. 47, 48.

[2] On terms for person in ancient Greek theology, see ch. iii. §§ 7, 15, above.

that the Persons of the Trinity are not so many real Selfs, but mere manifestations and aspects of one Self. The orthodox Greek fathers felt constrained under such circumstances to look for a term that would be less open to this misconstruction. They selected ὑπόστασις, that which stands under, using it in order to emphasize the truth that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are real and distinct Selfs, and not merely superficial aspects of one Self.

This term had its own difficulties, as thus applied, and was liable to be understood in the sense of οὐσία. Its Latin equivalent, *substantia*, had that meaning. And to speak of three divine Hypostases could be interpreted to mean an acknowledgment of three divine essences or substances, that is, three Divine Beings — a tritheistic doctrine. This confusion of terms gradually disappeared. A continued use of the phrase three hypostases, combined with the adoption of the ὁμοούσιος, slowly cleared the air. The doctrine that but one οὐσία is possessed by the divine hypostases relieved the use of the term ὑπόστασις of its tritheistic connotation.

It fell to the Cappadocian theologians practically to complete the crystallization of these terms; and St. Basil, in a letter addressed to his brother, St. Gregory Nyss.,[1] clearly explained the usage which was becoming permanent. He distinguishes two kinds of names, common and proper. The former are applied to what is common to several subjects, *e.g.* man;

[1] Epis. xxxviii. This letter is classic.

while the latter denote single subjects, *e.g.* Peter. Οὐσία signifies what is referred to by the use of a common name, while ὑπόστασις denotes what is identified by a proper name. Several subjects or ὑπόστασεις which can be rightly included in the reference of a common name are ὁμοούσιοι, that is, have one essence or general mode of existence.

When such terminology is applied to God, we call the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit ὑπόστασεις, meaning that there is no intercommunion or confusion between the notions by which they are distinctly apprehended and described. And we call them ὁμοούσιοι, meaning that the predications which describe Their being divine pertain to Them in common. In such an application of these terms an important difference between the divine and the human has to be remembered. There may be many separate human beings, but there is only one Divine Being and He is indivisible. To speak of two human ὑπόστασεις as ὁμοούσιοι means that they possess the same kind of οὐσία. That is, the oneness is generic only — not numerical. In God, however, the oneness of essence which is signified by calling several ὑπόστασεις ὁμοούσιοι means identity of essence, for the divine οὐσία is unique and indivisible.[1]

[1] Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, Vol. IV. pp. 82–89, maintains that the Cappadocians did not make ὁμοούσιος, as applied to the divine Persons, mean identity of essence, but generic equality. He is misled by their use of the analogy of a human father and son, and by failure to allow for their realistic point of view. These writers, after the manner of Plato, regarded the common nature of man as having

The terminology which St. Basil thus defined was preserved by St. John of Damascus and employed in his *de Fide Orthodoxa*,[1] which possesses in Eastern theology an authority parallel to that of St. Augustine's *de Trinitate* in Western theology.

§ 5. To summarize what has been said, patristic thought concerning the Trinity comes to a head in the distinction between two antithetic terms and their

a reality of its own, independently of individual men, and as being numerically one. Moreover, they refused to regard the human analogy as an adequate one.

In any case their assertion of the indivisible unity and identity of the essence of the three Persons is unmistakable. St. Basil, *Epis.* lii. 3, says that the Son's begetting is neither a separating and bestowal of substance nor a fluxion or shooting forth. St. Gregory Nyss., *c. Eunom.*, I. 35, says, "We do not let our idea of Them be melted down into one Person, but we keep distinct the properties of the Persons, while, on the other hand, not dividing in the Persons the oneness of their substance." Cf. VII. 5. St. Gregory Naz., *Theol. Orat.*, v. 14, says, "To us there is one God, for the Godhead is one, and all that proceedeth from Him is referred to the one . . . the Godhead is, to speak concisely, undivided in distinct Persons." Also, in v. 16, "But each of these Persons possesses unity, not less with that which is united to it than with itself, by reason of the identity of essence and power." Cf. V. 9. See Prolegomena to the Works of St. Gregory Nyss. (in *Nicene and Post-Nic. Fathers*, 2d Series, Vol. V.), ch. iv. pp. 23–29.

The position attained is summed up by St. Gregory Naz., Orat. xxi. 35: "We use in an orthodox sense the terms one essence and three hypostases, the one to denote the nature of the Godhead, the other the properties of the three. The Italians mean the same, but, owing to the scantiness of their vocabulary, and its poverty of terms, they are unable to distinguish between essence and hypostasis, and therefore introduce the term persons to avoid being understood to assert three essences."

[1] Cf. Lib. III. cap. iv. *init.*, for a brief summary.

equivalents. *Persona* or ὑπόστασις denotes that in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit which warrants Their being regarded as mutually distinct; while *substantia* or οὐσία signifies what is possessed by these Three in common. The word οὐσία became Latinized as *essentia*.

This terminology was perpetuated in scholastic theology, but along with a slightly confusing definition of *persona*, attributed to Boethius. It reads, "*Persona est naturae rationalis individua substantia.*"[1] Literally translated this means, "Person is the indivisible substance of a rational nature." As the word *substantia* is employed in theology to denote that which constitutes the divine Being, to define person as a substance, and then to declare that there are three divine Persons, is to run the risk of tritheistic interpretation. Scholastic writers, however, were not misled, but interpreted *substantia* in the definition referred to as equivalent to ὑπόστασις in its theologically acquired meaning.[2] *Subsistentia* often displaced *substantia*. In practical effect the definition means that person is the indivisible subject of a rational nature.

§ 6. Descartes was the first to pay attention to the

[1] In *de Duabus Naturis*.

[2] St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. xxix. 2, thus explains *substantia* in this definition. In art. 4, he says that a divine person signifies a relation of origin after the mode of substance or hypostasis in the divine nature. *Persona divina relationem originis significat per modum substantiae; seu hypostasis in divina natura.* Cf. H. C. Powell, *op. cit.*, pp. 147, 148, 154, 155.

fact that the ego or self constitutes the fundamental reality in personality. But, although the ancient fathers did not directly notice this fact, and refrained from trying to define person in itself, the notion of self is clearly implied in their use of *persona* and its equivalents, and constitutes the only positive element which can be shown to be comprehended in their idea of person in relation to the Trinity. The phraseology is modern, but we do not misrepresent the positive meaning with which they spoke of three divine Persons or Hypostases when we understand them to be asserting that three Selfs or Egos exist in and possess the indivisible essence of God.

They attributed to each and all of these Selfs whatever pertains to God as divine, but this does not define person *in se*. It simply expresses the truth that these Selfs are *divine* Persons. They also described Them severally, and mutually distinguished Them, by the proper names and mutual relations which are given Them or ascribed to Them in the New Testament. But this likewise adds nothing to the definition of person in itself. Their notion of person, as we have said, cannot be shown to have any fuller positive content than Self — the Subject of a rational nature.

As employed in trinitarian doctrine, the fathers did, however, delimit the meaning of the term person in two directions. They refused to sanction either the Sabellian definition of divine Persons as mere aspects, *dramatis personae*, or the opposite and tri-

theistic definition of Them as separate beings or individuals. The divine Persons, in brief, are real, eternal, and distinct Selfs, but do not constitute separate Divine Beings.[1]

That self constitutes the positive patristic meaning of person is confirmed by their use of the term nature, φύσις, *natura*, in defining the doctrine of Christ's Person. The definitions of Chalcedon and of the sixth Ecumenical Council, especially of the latter, make a very sharp and mutually exclusive delimitation of the meanings of person and nature.[2] In these decisions the natures of Christ are made to comprehend everything in line with essence, attributes, and proper operations respectively of God as divine and of man as human. Even the will is included. His Person, on the other hand, is regarded as constituting the Subject and Possessor of these several attributes and operations, and is antithetically distinguished from them.

No other view of the matter is consistent with the decision of the sixth Council that in the one Person of Christ "are two natural wills and two natural

[1] The ancients were concerned with describing the boundaries of personality — defining what it is not; — whereas moderns analyze the functions of personality by psychological investigation. See H. C. Powell, *op. cit.*, pp. 145, 146. Waterland, *Second Vindication*, pp. 650–653, sums up the positive elements in the patristic conception when he defines person as "an intelligent agent, having the distinctive characters of I, thou, and he; and not divided or distinguished into more intelligent agents capable of the same characters."

[2] This development has been described in ch. iii. § 15.

operations."[1] The context and the whole direction of patristic thought forbid us to think that this language either presupposes or implies the notion that Christ's Person is a totality made up of the two natures and their attributes and operations. His Person cannot have been regarded as to any extent constituted by His human nature, for all the orthodox fathers maintained that Christ's Person existed before the Incarnation. And they did not regard the Incarnation as changing or adding to His Person, *qua* person, but as an assumption of our nature by an unchangeable divine Person. By reason of the Incarnation the second Person of the Trinity supplied personality — selfhood — to the nature which[2] He assumed, and made its attributes and operations His own. He thenceforth possesses two natures, with all their respective operations,[3] and these natures possess in Him one and the same Person or Self. In brief, the Person, on the one hand, and the two natures, on the other hand, are inseparable and possess each

[1] See W. Bright, *St. Leo on the Incarn.*, notes 56, 156; St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.*, III. xviii; Rich. Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, V. xlviii. 9; liii. 3; liv. 2, 5–9.

[2] The Manhood which Christ assumed is said to be impersonal — that is, apart from His assumption of it. It could not, of course, exist without a personal subject of its attributes and operations. The point is that it acquired such a subject by being assumed by a divine Person. There is no personal subject in Christ other than the eternal Son. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, III. iv. 2–6; W. Bright, *op. cit.*, note 26.

[3] As St. Leo I says, in his *Tome*, "Each form [nature] does the acts which belong to it, in communion with the other."

other; but they do not constitute each other, for they are mutually distinguished. The Person is the Self of two natures and the two natures have but one Self. A rational nature is necessarily possessed of a person, and a person is necessarily the Self of a rational nature; but orthodox theological terminology does not permit us to make the terms person and nature overlap each other in their application.

§ 7. The term nature, φύσις, *natura*, in patristic theology, calls for a few separate remarks.[1] The conciliar language to which we have been referring shows that it signifies the totality of attributes and proper operations of which a person is the subject by virtue of any particular order of being in which he can rightly be said to live and act. Thus human nature means the sum of attributes and operations of which human persons are the subjects in so far as they are human. Individual characteristics are not included in the connotation of the word as here considered. Inasmuch as Christ has become Man without ceasing to be God, we discover two natures in Him. The totality of His attributes and operations as God constitutes His divine nature, and the sum of His attributes and operations as Man constitutes His human nature. According to patristic and catholic doctrine, these natures, φύσεις, remain distinct, never being commingled, but being united hypostatically, καθ' ὑπόστασιν,[2] in that they possess in common

[1] Cf. § 12. iv, below, where references are given.

[2] The phrase καθ' ὑπόστασιν ἕνωσιν was used by St. Cyril, in his

one Person or Self, viz., the second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

The terms οὐσία and φύσις denote the same substantial reality, but often under slightly different aspects. Οὐσία has reference to ontological content or substantial being; whereas φύσις connotes active attributes and operations. The divine Persons are one in essence, because They are the Selfs of one indivisible Being. They are one in nature, as alike possessing the fulness of the divine attributes and operations.

II. *In Modern Thought*

§ 8. As has been mentioned above, Descartes initiated the modern emphasis upon ego as the fundamental reality in personality.[1] Such a development of thought ought to have facilitated a general understanding and acceptance of the catholic doctrine concerning the Trinity and the Incarnation. It would have done so if modern philosophy had retained the catholic terminology, and had confined the positive meaning of the term person to its patristic limits. But various causes led them to employ that term in a more comprehensive sense, as signifying all that goes to constitute an individual, self-conscious, and rational being. Many protestant theologians have adopted this terminology, especially in relation to

second *Epistle to Nestorius*, and at once became stereotyped in catholic theology.

[1] In § 6, *init.*

the doctrine of Christ's Person; and the result has been very confusing. It has become unnecessarily difficult for moderns to understand and accept trinitarian doctrine. If person means all that the phrase "a rational being" signifies, to assert the existence of three Persons in the Godhead can only be taken to imply that there are three divine beings. This reduces the doctrine of the Trinity to an appearance of hopeless self-contradiction and absurdity, for it seems to mean that three divine beings are one divine being.[1]

The term substance has also been given a new meaning. In trinitarian theology it is equivalent to essence; and to speak of three divine Persons in one divine substance means no more than that they exist in one Divine Being. But the somewhat one-sided attention now paid to physical phenomena has tended to give this term an exclusively physical connotation. This has made its theological use in defining the doctrine of God to appear like a misapplication of terms; for enlightened thinkers rightly refuse to accept a physical conception of the divine nature. It is true that the pantheistic system of Spinoza identifies God with universal substance;[2] but this terminology is not current except in certain philosophical circles, and where it prevails it introduces another difficulty. It nullifies the meaning of the catholic phrase "divine substance" by obliterating

[1] Cf. ch. v. § 9, above.

[2] On pantheism, see *Being and Attributes of God*, ch. ix. § 5.

the distinction between divine and creaturely substance.

The right of any science or philosophy to adopt its own terminology may not in the abstract be denied; although the right of older sciences to retain their own long established use of terms is equally unassailable. The point to be emphasized in this connection is that, when theological terms which have long established connotations are adopted for new purposes and given new meanings, the new terminology cannot rightly be employed as a basis for interpreting and adversely criticising theological propositions in which the older terminology is employed. No terminology possesses any higher validity or wider claim than its conventional use in particular departments of thought gives to it. To interpret the catholic doctrine of the Trinity by giving its terms the meanings which they have acquired in modern and non-catholic use cannot be justified except on the plea of ignorance of the catholic terminology.

An excellent illustration of the modern use of the term person appears in Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy*,[1] where Professor A. T. Ormund defines the Person of Christ as "The concrete individuality of Jesus Christ embracing the human and divine natures in one unitary consciousness and experience." Those who framed the still existing terms of catholic belief concerning Christ made, as we have seen, an antithesis between person and nature; whereas Pro-

[1] *s. v.* "Person of Christ."

fessor Ormund, in common with many modern writers, treats the Person of Christ as embracing His natures.[1]

The explanation might be made, and in accordance with fact, that modern writers do not as a rule content themselves with reproducing patristic propositions; but devote themselves to a fresh examination of the whole Christological problem, in the light of accumulating knowledge, and by the methods of historical criticism. We are far from denying the permissibility and value of fresh investigation into fundamental doctrines, when such investigation avoids the snares of rationalistic and question-begging presuppositions. But such investigations can afford no legitimate warrant for criticising catholic propositions as if their terms meant what modern scholars are apt to mean when using them — a method which is far from being historical.

Catholic theology declares that in Christ there are one Person and two natures, meaning that in Him one Self possesses the attributes and operations respectively of both God and man, without mutual disturbance or confusion. It also teaches that in the one and indivisible Divine Being there are three distinct and co-eternal Persons, meaning that the one essence of God is the essence alike of three Subjects or Selfs. Modern scholars often criticise such terms

[1] His language is also opposed to the catholic doctrine that each of our Lord's two natures is complete and distinct, possessing its own consciousness and all the operations proper to itself. The modern habit of confusing the natures of Christ comes from German protestant theology.

as if they meant that three concrete individualities, in the modern sense of such a phrase, co-exist in and constitute one Divine Being. The law that in criticising propositions their real meaning should first be ascertained is here violated.

§ 9. The chief terms of trinitarian doctrine were crystallized in meaning by the ancient Councils; and during subsequent centuries a vast theological literature has come into existence in which they are employed without material alteration of their significance. Under such circumstances it would be unreasonable to ask catholic theologians to abandon so ancient a terminology for a different one. Such action would involve an apparent, if not a real, breach with the past. It would reduce the conservative value of the Creeds, and would soon make unintelligible the Ecumenical definitions by which the Church has preserved the teaching which she originally received from the apostles. In short, it would undo the work of centuries, and expose the faithful to many errors. Believing as they do that the ecumenical definitions of faith have crystallized results of the Holy Spirit's guidance, and that in their historic meaning they correctly define saving truths, catholic theologians would be forsaking their duty of preserving the faith once for all delivered, if they abandoned this heritage of "sound words" at the command of modern philosophers and protestant theologians.

The development and wide use of a terminology which obscures the meaning of these "sound words"

does indeed impose an important duty upon those who retain them. But this duty is one of explaining and translating the ancient terms. It is not one of repudiating and abandoning them. Such a course, as we have said, could hardly fail to be interpreted as signifying a break with catholic antiquity, and would create very serious difficulties for the faithful.

To explain trinitarian terms in language intelligible to modern minds is not excessively difficult, for there is nothing esoteric or occult in them, and the ideas which they severally express are far from being foreign to modern thought. The term person in both catholic and modern usage comprehends in its meaning the idea which moderns express by such terms as ego and self. The difference is that this idea practically completes the positive meaning of *persona* in the doctrine of the Trinity; whereas in modern philosophy the meaning of person is more comprehensive, including all that goes to make up the idea of an individual, self-conscious, and rational being.

It is of the utmost importance for success in investigating the subject before us that this difference in usage of the term person should be kept clearly in mind. We have therefore referred to it in several previous connections, and now wish to give it especial emphasis. It is a difference which carries with it a paradoxical result. As we have been showing, to speak of three divine Persons in the modern sense of terms is equivalent to speaking of three Divine

Beings; whereas to confess that three Persons co-exist in God, in the catholic sense of terms, is a strictly monotheistic confession — one which in fact protects our belief in one personal God. The paradox appears in this, that the two propositions which respectively assert and deny the co-existence of three divine Persons — the assertion being in catholic terminology and the denial being in modern terminology — can both without inconsistency be acknowledged to be true; for the doctrine which is asserted is one, while the doctrine which is denied is quite another.

No doubt many will deny that there can be three real selfs where there are not three separate beings. But such a denial affords an example of pure dogmatism; for, apart from supernatural revelation, the possibilities of divine personality lie beyond our capacity to determine. The point which we are making, however, is that the two ideas of self and being do not coincide in logical content; and to speak of three Selfs in God (three Persons in the theological sense) is not by the very meaning of terms equivalent to speaking of three Divine Beings. On the contrary, the former doctrine of God is strictly monotheistic, while the latter is undeniably tritheistic.[1]

§ 10. Using the term in its modern and non-theological meaning, our knowledge of human personality has been, and is being, significantly enlarged by modern psychological investigation. It would, of course, betray ignorance to deny this; and would

[1] See ch. v. § 9, above.

show a lack of acquaintance with recent thought to disparage the immense importance of the data which have been accumulated. The writer would be quite untrue to his convictions if he allowed himself to be understood as thinking it unnecessary to reckon with the results of the modern psychological analysis of personality.[1]

But, in dealing with the subject before us, we need to remind ourselves of the precise range of psychological investigation, of the necessary limitations of its conclusions, and therefore of the real bearing of these conclusions upon the problem of divine personality. Psychology is a descriptive science, and is concerned with observable processes and conditions of human consciousness. In modern parlance this means that psychology analyzes and describes *personality* in its psychical aspects. In theological parlance it means that psychology describes *human nature* in its pyschical aspects.

Psychology postulates the existence of ego or self, but cannot get back of psychical processes to make this self a distinct and immediate object of scrutiny and description. It is true that the distinct reality of self has been denied by certain philosophical writers,[2] but such denial is speculative and does not commend

[1] Cf. on this subject, Illingworth, *Personality*, Lecs. i, ii; Powell, *Prin. of the Incarn.*, pp. 157–170, and pertinent arts. in Baldwin, *Dic. of Philos.*

[2] *E.g.* by Hume, *Treatise on Human Nature*, Pt. I. Bk. IV. § vi. See H. C. Powell, *Prin. of the Incarn.*, pp. 159–166; Conder, *Basis of Faith*, pp. 62–91.

itself to careful thinkers in general. The argument of Descartes, *cogito ergo sum*, "I think, therefore I exist," can be rejected only upon the basis of a scepticism which nullifies the validity of psychological science and of all sciences. Psychology cannot in practice treat the ego as a mere stream of subjective phenomena, but must regard these phenomena as implying an agent, a self, to whom the activities of the soul are referred. The self of a thinking, feeling, and willing human being is distinguishable from the phenomena of consciousness, but in itself it forever escapes our scrutiny. It is not, and cannot be, the subject-matter of psychological analysis and description. It remains and must remain an inscrutable entity, the existence of which, however, has to be assumed in order to account for psychical phenomena. It cannot be scientifically defined *in se*, nor can its intrinsic possibilities be fully ascertained by any known method of human discovery.

It is, of course, perfectly true that psychology affords valuable knowledge concerning the nature, conditions, and limits of the functioning of a *human* self. But the question whether these conditions and limitations are intrinsic, and pertain to every self, considered as self, lies quite beyond the domain of psychological investigation, and of any method of scientific enquiry and determination. The definition of self is one of the most baffling problems of philosophy; and, like the problem of the ultimate nature of substance, can never be drawn by natural investigation from

the realm of mystery into that of scientific description.[1]

In thus asserting the mysteriousness of self (person in the theological sense), we are not assuming a purely agnostic position with reference to it. We possess important knowledge of personality, although not such knowledge as enables us positively to define what it is itself and to determine its intrinsic potentialities. We are self-conscious, and stand upon secure ground when we distinguish self from impersonal subjects by the fact that it is the subject of a rational nature, and when we regard self-consciousness and self-determination as necessary conditions of self-realization. This knowledge, however, is not so much a product of modern psychological investigation as a long-established postulate of sound thinking.

Modern science affords important knowledge concerning the *human* self, although a knowledge which is to some extent of a negative quality. Thus psychology refuses to identify self with the body which it employs, and perceives that it is never plural in human individuals. Although clearly distinguishable from the psychical phenomena by which its presence and activity are indicated, the human self is never dissociated from them; and cannot reasonably be thought of as existing separately from or inde-

[1] On the inscrutability of self — person in the theological sense — see the writer's *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 49–51; H. C. Powell, *op. cit.*, pp. 170 *et seq.*; Illingworth, *Personality*, pp. 28, 52, 240, 241. Recent investigations into the "subliminal self" ought to deepen our sense of the mystery of personality. Cf. W. Sanday, *Christologies*, VI.

pendently of the rational nature by which it exercises its characteristic functions.

§ 11. But psychological investigation affords abundant evidence that a human self is not independently capable of full self-realization, or of complete self-determination. Its functioning is circumscribed and limited by conditions which are external to itself. It is social, and cannot satisfy the social instinct without dependence upon other beings.[1] Its cognitions, manifestations, and communications depend at every point upon the bodily organism; and all its psychical activity, whether intellectual, emotional, or volitional, is conditioned and limited by molecular movements within the brain. In brief, a human self cannot determine or realize itself except in dependence upon what is external to itself.

But the very idea of a self demands that for its full actualization it shall be capable of a self-determination the conditions and potentialities of which are wholly within itself. The human self does not possess this capacity, and therefore is not a complete self.[2] The external limitations under which it acts, so far

[1] See quotations from W. Richmond's *Essay on Personality*, in Illingworth, *Trinity*, pp. 254–256.

[2] See Lotze, *Microcosmus*, Bk. IX. ch. iv. § 4; R. C. Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, pp. 161–163. Schultz, *Apologetics*, pp. 42–45, calls attention to the fact that human personality *becomes* personal, from an impersonal background, by contact with non-ego. Divine personality does not become. N. K. Davis, *Elements of Ethics*, pp. 19, 20, shows that the sense of responsibility reveals the imperfection of human personality and implies the correlative notion of a perfect person.

from exhibiting the conditions of a complete self, have to be eliminated from consideration in ascertaining the necessary laws and intrinsic capacities of such a self.

Now this elimination of external limitations in self-determination and self-realization gives us infinite personality, for freedom from external conditions and limitations constitutes the distinguishing mark of the infinite. There is but one infinite being, and He is God. In Him, therefore, and in Him alone, we find the requirements of complete personality satisfied. If God is personal, and to deny that He is is to place Him in a lower rank of being than ourselves, His personality is necessarily infinite. That is, it cannot be limited by any external conditions or by limitations of any kind except such as pertain to its being what it is in itself — a real somewhat, an infinite personality. Unless the infinite God has all the conditions and determining principles of His personal life and operations wholly within His own being, His personality will be finite, and the notion of an infinite God possessed of finite personality is obviously absurd and self-contradictory. There appears to be no escape from this logic. Complete personality must, from the very notion of completeness, find the grounds of its completeness and self-sufficiency within its own being; and this requirement cannot be satisfied under the conditions of human or finite personality.[1]

[1] We have treated of divine personality in *Being and Attributes of God*, ch. x. §§ 6–8, where references are given.

Yet the idea of an infinite person has seemed self-contradictory to many modern thinkers. It is urged that all conceivable forms of personal functioning and self-realization are reduced to unthinkable nonsense unless the self is conscious of a distinction between self and non-self, between ego and non-ego; and if either term of this distinction is unreal, the other term must also be regarded as unreal. The reality of ego depends upon the reality of the non-ego from which it has to be distinguished in self-consciousness. Willing is one of the fundamental functions of a person, but to will is to determine operations which require an objective sphere, other than self, for their actualization. To love — and the Christian at least believes that God *is* love — there must exist another person than the self who loves, in order to give determinate direction to such functioning. In brief, a personal being, in order to be personal, is necessarily dependent upon the existence of something other than self; and this non-ego cannot be purely impersonal, for a person is necessarily social.

This difficulty has seemed very formidable to non-trinitarian theists, and a tendency has shown itself among them to lose their hold upon the truth of divine personality and to drift into a pantheistic position. On the other hand, trinitarian theists find a solution of the difficulty in the plural personality of God.[1]

[1] The attempts to meet the difficulty without resort to revealed doctrine are based upon the contention that human personality is but a pale copy of complete personality, and that its limitations are

If several distinct Persons co-exist in the indivisible essence of God, these Persons constitute non-egos to each other, and afford to each other the conditions of personal life and functioning. Moreover, according to the Christian doctrine — which, it should be remembered, is not a speculative conjecture, but a revealed truth — these Persons are wholly within the Divine Being, within the Being, that is, of which each Person constitutes a self. Therefore the divine Persons possess within their own essence all the grounds of self-determination and self-realization, and are not dependent upon external realities or conditions for their completeness and self-sufficiency.[1]

due to its finitude — not to the requirements of personality *in se.* W. Knight, *Aspects of Theism*, p. 163, asks, "Is it not conceivable that the sense of limiting *non-ego* would vanish, in the case of being that was transcendent and a life that was all pervasive?" Hermann Lotze, *Microcosmus*, Vol. II. p. 680, while admitting "that the ego *is thinkable* only in relation to the Non-Ego," adds that "it *may be experienced* previous to and out of every such relation, and that to this is due the possibility of its subsequently becoming thinkable in that relation." Otto Pfleiderer urges that self-consciousness is not based upon the antithesis of ego and non-ego, but upon that of ego and its own changing states. The distinction involved is internal: *Philos. of Religion*, Vol. III. pp. 280 *et seq.* Iverach, *Theism*, pp. 208, 209, says that the antithesis between ego and non-ego is not ontological — not based upon the necessities of personality, — but grows out of the finite form of human consciousness.

These considerations are valuable; but they postulate a more definite idea of the nature of God than purely natural experience demonstrates, and depend for satisfying effect upon the fuller trinitarian conception of God.

[1] R. C. Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, pp. 164–166; and *Reason and Religion*, pp. 152–155; Illingworth, *Trinity*, pp. 136–

It is true, as has elsewhere been acknowledged, that this doctrine raises its own insoluble problem; for we cannot hope to be able to explain how three selfs can coinhere in one indivisible being.[1] But, as has also been indicated, we need not regard the presence of insoluble problems as a reason for rejecting the only available hypothesis concerning God which is both free from self-contradiction and in agreement with the facts of human responsibility. This freedom from self-contradiction makes trinitarian doctrine more reasonable and credible than any other form of theism.

Even the belief in our own personality raises an insoluble problem; for we cannot understand how personality can be united, as we know it in fact to be united, with a material organism. The problem of threefold personality in God is neither more nor less insoluble than that of our own personality. But a unitarian conception of divine personality, while it raises an equally insoluble problem of explaining the

144, 188–192; J. Caird, *Fundamental Idea of Christianity*, Vol. I. pp. 73–79; C. Gore, *Creed of the Christian*, pp. 18–25; R. Vaughan, in *Church Quarterly Rev.*, April, 1910, pp. 122, 123; B. F. Westcott, *Epp. of St. John*, pp. 218–220.

It should not be supposed that this line of thought is of modern origin. The argument that the knowledge and love of God gain expression through the generation of the Son and the spiration of the Spirit, and in the social relations within the Trinity, is found in many catholic writers, and constitutes the ordinary rationale — not demonstration — of our doctrine. We return to this in ch. vii. § 2, and in ch. ix. § 6.

[1] In ch. v. § 7.

immanence of a Person in a physical universe, has the added difficulty of leaving unremoved the apparent contradiction between personality and infinity when these are attributed to the same Divine Being. It is because trinitarian doctrine does remove this appearance of self-contradiction that we are justified in claiming that it is altogether the most reasonable doctrine of God. We cannot, indeed, demonstrate its truth upon the exclusive basis of natural experience and reason; but once revealed, it satisfies the requirements of reason as no other theistic doctrine can satisfy them.

III. *Terms Defined*

§ 12. It seems desirable at this point, partly by way of recapitulation, and partly by way of facilitating an understanding of the rest of this volume, to define together in concise language the chief technical terms employed by catholic theologians in treating of the Trinity: — essence, substance, homoousios, nature, subsistence, suppositum, hypostasis, and person; and generation, procession, notion, relation, property, principium, monarchy, subordination, economy, and mission.[1]

i. *Essence* (*essentia*, οὐσία) is employed both in

[1] On trinitarian terms, see Petavius, *de Trin.*, Lib. iv; Perrone, *Praelec. de Sanc. Trin.*, cap. i; R. L. Ottley, *Incarnation*, Vol. II. pp. 251–266; Schouppe, *Elem. Theol. Dogm.*, Tr. vi. §§ 6–47; A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, pp. 20, 21; Baldwin, *Dic. of Philos.*, *s. v.* "Latin and Scholastic Terminology"; St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, *passim;* Suicer, *Thesaurus*, *passim;* the writer's *Doc. of God*, Q. 62.

the abstract and in the concrete.[1] In the abstract it is the quiddity of a thing, or that which is signified by its definition. In the concrete it is the reality by virtue of which a thing is the determinate thing which it is. The divine essence is that which constitutes God to be God.[2]

ii. *Substance* (*substantia*) is that which exists *per se*, that is, requires nothing else in which to inhere for existence. This definition distinguishes it from *accidents*, which require something in which to inhere, and do not exist *per se*.[3] There are no accidents whatever in the Divine Being, and accordingly as applied to God substance becomes equivalent to essence. The reality of God which is called essence and substance denotes that which is one in God and which constitutes Him to be one Divine Being. It is the bond of unity, the common possession, of the three

[1] On *essence*, see St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I. iii. 3; xxiv. 2, ad 3; B. Boedder, *Natural Theol.*, pp. 325–334; E. Grandclaude, *Breviarium Philos.*, Vol. I. pp. 167–171; *Cath. Encyc.*, *s. v.* "Essence and Existence"; R. L. Ottley, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. pp. 255, 256; Rickaby, *Metaphysics*, Pt. I. ch. iii; and in this volume, ch. iii. § 7; ch. vi. § 4.

[2] Both οὐσία and φύσις tended to mean person at first, because in God the οὐσία is nothing else than Himself. An example of this use of φύσις appears in St. Cyril's famous phrase, "one nature of the Word which was incarnate." See p. 97, note 1, above; and R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. p. 170.

[3] On *substance*, see Bethune-Baker, *Early Hist. of Christ. Doctrine*, pp. 231–233; T. B. Strong, "The History of the Theol. Term Substance," in *Journal of Theol. Studies*, 1902; Rickaby, *op. cit.*, Pt. II. ch. i; Schouppe, *op. cit.*, Tr. vi. §§ 20–24; E. Grandclaude, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 196–198; Baldwin, *op. cit.*, *s. vv.* "Substance"; "Substance (in Theology)"; and this volume, ch. iii. § 6; ch. vi. § 3.

divine Persons. It should be evident that, as applied to God, the word substance in catholic theology has no materialistic connotation. God is pure spirit.[1]

iii. *Homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος, consubstantial) signifies of the same essence.[2] The meaning of this sameness depends upon the rank in being in connection with which the term is employed. When creatures are described as of the same essence, nothing more is meant than that they belong to the same genus and possess the same *kind* of essence or substance. The divine essence, however, belongs to no genus, but is absolutely unique; and being also indivisible, it cannot be distributed so as to produce a genus of similar but separate beings. Accordingly, to be of the same essence with God means, in theological terminology, to possess the self-same essence which God possesses, the unity of essence being not generic but of identity. When the Son is declared to be homoousios with the Father, it is meant that He is a distinct self of the self-same essence with the Father.

iv. *Nature* (*natura*, φύσις), etymologically considered, has reference to nativity and to what is derived from another by birth.[3] In theology it is

[1] Cf. pp. 188, 189, above.

[2] On *homoousios*, see above, ch. iii. §§ 9, 11; and pp. 180, 181. Further references are given in p. 82, note 1.

[3] The word φύσις comes from φύω, to produce. *Natura* comes from *nascor*, to arise, be born. On *Nature*, see Ottley, *op. cit.*, Vol. II. pp. 258, 270; Schouppe, *op. cit.*, Tr. vi. §§ 10–12; Suicer, *Thesaurus*, *s.v.* φύσις; E. Grandclaude, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 201–203; and this volume, ch. iii. § 15; ch. vi. § 7.

practically equivalent to essence, the difference lying in the aspect which is considered. The same thing is called essence as constituting the principle of being, and nature as the principle of operation.[1] The distinctive connotation of "nature" appears in the teaching that our Lord possesses the divine and the human natures; that is, He possesses the proper operations of God and of man. It also appears in the practice of regarding the divine attributes, including the active ones as well as the quiescent, as describing the divine nature.

v. *Subsistence*[2] (*subsistentia*) *in the abstract* signifies the manner in which an essence, substance, or nature actually exists *per se*, as an individual being. Thus God is said to have a personal and threefold subsistence. *In the concrete* it denotes a real subject or centre of a complete being, to which the properties and predicates of such a being are referred. Catholic doctrine teaches that there are three such subsistences in the one being of God.

vi. *Suppositum*,[3] that which is placed under, is nearly equivalent to *subsistentia* in the concrete. It

[1] Tanquerey, *de Deo Trino*, § 14. See p. 203, note 2, above, on the tendency of οὐσία and φύσις to mean person. On other and non-theological uses of the word *nature*, see Murray's *New English Dic.*, *q.v.*

[2] On *subsistence*, see St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.*, I. xxiv. 2; Perrone, *de S. Trin.*, cap. i. § 16; Schouppe, *op. cit.*, Tr. vi. § 25.

[3] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, III. ii. 2; Perrone, *op. cit.*, cap. i. § 17; Schouppe, *op. cit.*, Tr. vi. §§ 26, 29, 30. The term is found in St. Ambrose, but was not ordinarily employed before the scholastic period.

is a concrete subject which possesses *per se* a mode of existence proper to itself, and thereby constitutes a complete concrete subsistence. It is signified by a proper name. Thus the dog, Gyp, denotes a *suppositum*, as does also the man, Robert, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Every person is a *suppositum*, but not every *suppositum* is a person. The use of this term is almost wholly confined to scholastic writers.

vii. *Hypostasis*,[1] ὑπόστασις, is sometimes used by scholastic writers as equivalent to subsistence in the concrete and *suppositum;* and like them is applied in this use to inanimate and irrational as well as to rational subjects. But when employed in defining trinitarian doctrine it becomes equivalent, in scholastic terminology as well as in that of the Cappadocian fathers, to person.[2]

What is denoted in their mutually equivalent usage by the terms subsistence, *suppositum*, and hypostasis is also denoted in common speech by proper names and by pronouns; *e.g.* the sun, Bob (referring to some particular animal), Peter, Christ, he, she, and it. This fact will perhaps assist the reader in understanding their meaning. But it should be remembered that in trinitarian use these terms do

[1] On *hypostasis*, see in this vol., ch. iii. §§ 7, 15, ch. vi. § 4; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, § 99; R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. pp. 256, 257.

[2] Because of its etymological connotation, the term hypostasis never became really congenial to scholastic theology. St. Thomas (*Sum. Theol.*, I. xxix. 2, 3; xxxix. 1, ad 3) employs it with some caution.

not denote the individual being of God, but the subjects or selfs in that being to which we attribute in common the divine essence, substance, nature, attributes, and operations.

viii. What has been said in this last paragraph applies also to the term *person* (*persona*); but this term is exclusively applied to rational agents. Scholastically defined, person means a rational suppositum, the subject or self of a rational nature and being. And this appears to be the practical meaning in scholastic acceptance of the definition attributed to Boethius, "the indivisible substance of a rational soul."[1] Dr. Waterland defines a person as "an intelligent agent, having the distinctive characters of I, thou, he; and not divided or distinguished into more intelligent agents capable of the same characters."[2] A person may, indeed, possess a composite nature. Thus a human person possesses both a body and a soul; and the Person of Christ possesses the divine and the human nature. But the self in any case is indivisible, and possesses a continuous and unchanged identity even when, as in the case of Christ, a new nature is assumed. The theological meaning of person is also consistent with the co-existence of several persons in one being, which is the possession by several selfs

[1] Given in *de Duabus Naturis: Persona est animae rationalis individua substantia.* Cf. St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I. xxix. 3, *ad* 4; Rickaby, *Metaphys.*, Pt. II. ch. ii. St. Thomas says that "divine person signifies a relation of origin *per modum substantiae seu hypostasis in divina natura*"; *op. cit.*, I. xxix. 4.

[2] *Second Vindication*, p. 651 (*Works*, Vol. II).

of what is numerically the same essence and substance.[1]

§ 13. The terms thus far defined are all more or less related to the term person. Those which remain to be considered are employed in describing the mutual distinctions and relations of the divine Persons, and Their several external manifestations and operations.

i. *Generation* (*generatio*, γέννησις) is that kind of origin of one person from another which results in the consequent mutual relationship of father and son. As applied to God, it signifies the eternal operation by which the first Person of the Trinity produces the second Person, and communicates to Him the fulness of His own essence or eternal Godhead. It is this operation which constitutes the first Person to be God the Father, and the second Person to be God the Son.[2]

ii. *Procession* (*processio*, ἐκπόρευσις) is the eternal operation by which the third Person of the Trinity is produced.[3] A distinction, however, is made between *procession* and *spiration* (*spiratio*), the former describing the operation on its passive side,

[1] On person, see the author's *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 49–51; *Doctrine of God*, Q. lxii. 4, 5; this vol., ch. iii. § 15; ch. vi. §§ 6, 10; St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I. xxix; Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, § 99; Illingworth, *Personality*, Lec. iii and app. note 12; Moberly, *Reason and Religion*, p. 141; Eck, *Incarnation*, pp. 166–168; Davis, *Elements of Ethics*, pp. 19, 20. Cf. Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 33, 34.

[2] Cf. ch. vii. § 5, below, where references are given.

[3] Cf. ch. vii. § 7, below.

and the latter describing it on its active side. Thus the Father (the Son participating) is said to spirate the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost is said to proceed. The term procession is also used in a wider sense as denoting both the generation of the Son and the spiration of the Holy Ghost.[1]

iii. *Notions* (*notiones*), in the doctrine of the Trinity, signify the predicates which are applicable to the divine Persons, as distinguished from their common essence, and which serve to describe and mutually to distinguish Them: — innascibility, paternity, filiation, spiration, and procession.[2]

iv. The last four of these notions are called *relations* (*relationes*), because each of them describes the status of a divine Person in relation to another.[3]

v. Three of them are called *properties* (*proprietates*), since each of them serves by itself to characterize one of the divine Persons considered by Himself: — paternity, filiation, and procession.[4]

vi. *Principium* signifies the fountain, source, or cause of the divine processions.[5] The word cause, *αἰτία*, is used, of course, in a special, non-temporal, and non-contingent connotation; for the divine

[1] The word *procession* is also used to describe the "going forth" of the Son and of the Spirit with reference to temporal effects — *i.e.* in relation to "mission." See ch. viii. § 4, below.

[2] Cf. ch. vii. § 4, below.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Cf. ch. vii. §§ 8, 9, below, on the *principatus* of the Father, where references are given.

processions are eternal, and the second and third Persons have no beginning. They have life in Themselves.[1] *Principatus*, a derivative term, is applied to the Father to denote that the *principium* of the divine Persons is seated in Him.

vii. *Monarchy* (*monarchia*, μοναρχία) describes the Trinity as having but one *principium* and source of the divine processions.[2]

viii. *Subordination* (*subordinatio*) signifies the consequence of the divine processions, that the Son is to be regarded as after the Father in personal order, and the Holy Spirit after the Father and the Son. It is important to remember, however, that no implication either of temporal sequence or of inequality in essence and nature is intended or involved in this use of the term.[3]

ix. *Economy* (οἰκονομία), as used in relation to the divine Persons, signifies the particular external manifestations and operations which revelation teaches us especially to attribute to each Person.[4] The act of thus attributing these operations is called *appropriation* (κόλλησις).[5]

x. *Mission* (*missio*) describes the economic procession of one divine Person from another in relation to some temporal effect.[6]

[1] St. John v. 26.

[2] Cf. ch. vii. §§ 8, 9, below.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] On this and other uses of the term, see ch. viii. §§ 1, 2, below.

[5] Cf. ch. viii. § 3, below.

[6] Cf. ch. viii. § 4, below.

CHAPTER VII

THE DIVINE PERSONS

I. *In the Light of Reason and Analogy*

§ 1. In the previous chapters we have seen that the doctrine of the Trinity contains five leading particulars: (*a*) that there is but one Divine Being; (*b*) that in the unity of this Being three co-eternal and co-equal Persons exist; (*c*) that these Persons are to be distinguished by Their relations in procession: — the second Person being eternally begotten of the Father, so as to be His Son and Word; and the third Person proceeding from the Father through the Son, so as to be the Holy Spirit of both; (*d*) that the three Persons share in the possession of one indivisible divine essence, and exist in each other; (*e*) that Their distinct manifestations and operations — Their economies — are determined by their eternal order in procession.

Our attention thus far has been given to the manner in which this doctrine has been revealed; to its ecclesiastical definition; to its evidences and the objections raised against it; and to the terms which have been appropriated by catholic theology for its accurate explication. We have yet to consider the characteristics and mutual relations by which the

divine Persons are distinguished and described; the eternal processions, and the order of Persons determined thereby; the mutual coinherence of the Persons; Their several manifestations and economies in this world; and the practical bearings of the doctrine of the Trinity on other truths and on human life.

§ 2. It has been maintained in this treatise that the distinction of persons in the indivisible unity of God cannot, properly speaking, be discovered and demonstrated by the unaided natural reason. Our first knowledge of the Trinity comes to us through supernatural revelation. But, as has also been shown, the universe exhibits significant traces of the nature of its Maker; and, when the needed clue is afforded by revealed doctrine, men are enabled to perceive that the order of visible things is the handiwork of a Being in whom threefoldness is fundamental.[1] It has still further been shown that the hypothesis of plural personality in God strengthens our hold upon the truth that the Infinite is really personal, and enables us to resist the tendencies to pantheism and agnosticism which embarrass those who maintain unitarian views of God.[2]

In brief, the teaching of a plurality of persons in God is eminently credible, and trinitarian doctrine appears best to harmonize with the threefoldness which is discernible in every department of creaturely being, experience, and thought. Even among those

[1] Cf. ch. ii. §§ 1–3, above.
[2] Cf. ch. vi. § 11, above.

who regard the Christian doctrine of the Trinity as an unsubstantiated development of human speculation, writers are found to acknowledge that there has always existed a world-wide tendency to regard God, or the gods, as threefold; and that this tendency is to be explained by the natural constitution of things — is inevitable.[1]

The fact remains, however, that the supernatural manifestations of the divine Persons, as recorded in the Scriptures, afford the only positive proof that there are three, and only three, Persons in God. The doctrine of the Trinity could not have been clearly established, if it had not been revealed; and even when once revealed, we are unable, properly speaking, to demonstrate its truth upon the basis of mere natural experience and reason. It is true that Christian theologians have been able to fortify men's belief therein by rational arguments; but the positive and determinative value of such arguments is invariably dependent upon presuppositions concerning God which are more significant for the argument than any data which natural investigation and unassisted reason can certify.

Thus St. Thomas and other catholic writers have shown that the knowledge, and especially the love, of God involve and depend upon personal relationships; and that, if God is to possess all the conditions of His life within His own essence, these relationships

[1] Cf. ch. i. § 2, above, and the quotations there given from Aristotle and Prof. Paine.

must constitute real and eternal distinctions within His being, and there must be several Persons or Selfs within the indivisible Godhead.[1] Such reasoning is sound, but its validity is dependent upon a conception of God and of His personal attributes which is more determinate than any theistic doctrine which pagan philosophers have been able to substantiate. The argument, in brief, does not constitute formal proof; for its force depends upon a fuller knowledge of God than such proof can postulate, without in some degree begging the question, as the untaught and unassisted natural reason is capable of viewing it.

This method of argument does, however, establish the fact that a plurality of divine Persons seems to be demanded by an adequate theism — that is, by Christian theism, the only adequate theism which has ever been developed. The acknowledgment must indeed be made that even Christian theism cannot,

[1] Cf. ch. vi. § 11, above, where this line of thought is explained, and modern references are given. Classic examples of such argumentation occur in St. Anselm, *Monologium*, chh. xxix–lxiv; St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxvii. 3, 4. Cf. Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, §§ 101, 102; R. Vaughan, in *Church Quarterly Rev.*, Apr., 1910, pp. 122–126; Franzelin, *de Deo Trino*, Th. xxvi. The very title Logos, applied in Scripture to the Son, was interpreted by many ancient writers as showing that the Son is the objectifying of the Father's thought. He is the Image of God in whom the Father contemplates His own essence. The thought that the Holy Spirit is the Love of the Father, and the bond of the Trinity is found in Cappadocian theology and in St. Augustine. Cf. Martensen's rationale of the Trinity as love: *Christian Dogmatics*, §§ 52–58; Jas. Orr, *Side Lights on Christ. Doctrine*, p. 37; R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. pp. 248–250; R. Owen, *Dogm. Theol.*, ch. vi. § 1.

without begging what remains of the question, demonstrate the necessity that the divine Persons should be three, neither more nor less. Yet it needs to be added that a peculiar verisimilitude of truth can be shown to inhere in the doctrine of three divine Persons, which appears to be lacking to the notion either of a duality of Persons or of more than three Persons. A duality seems to demand a third for unity; and a fourth seems to be excluded by the law of parsimony — that no larger number of factors shall be hypothecated in a theory than appear to be necessary. In this connection it should not be forgotten that, as has been shown, all nature, experience, and thought seem to reflect some kind of threefoldness as constituting a fundamental law of being.[1]

We need also to emphasize an important result of Christian experience — one which has been perceived by a countless number of believers during all the Christian centuries. Whenever, and under whatever conditions, men have accepted trinitarian doctrine as their working hypothesis, and have sincerely endeavoured to put it to practical proof by employing it for the guidance and control of the spiritual life, they have discovered in their lives a fulness of meaning and a rational satisfaction of their deepest instincts which they have never discovered upon any

[1] Cf. ch. ii. § 2, above; and ch. ix. § 6, below. Arguments for the contention that there can be neither less nor more than three divine Persons are found in St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, vi. 7; St. Anselm, *Monologium*, chh. lxii, lxiii; St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxx. 2.

other basis. One who earnestly serves and humbly worships the Trinity in unity finds himself enjoying a life that is worth living, and sees its difficulties and problems lose their terrifying influence upon his mind and spirit. He experiences a confident assurance which enables him without guilt of presumption to claim to know the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and to ratify the teaching that in such knowledge is eternal life.[1] The genuineness of this knowledge of the three divine Persons cannot be demonstrated to others by logic, and it cannot be acquired except through spiritual experience. It is the result of perception rather than of argument — perception made possible by obedience to the law that spiritual things are spiritually examined.[2]

The sum of the matter is that supernatural revelation teaches, without contradicting enlightened reason, and spiritual experience based thereupon abundantly confirms, the doctrine that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are distinct Persons, or Selfs, who alike possess the indivisible essence of God and are co-eternal and co-equal objects of our adoring love and service. In this chapter we are to consider the several notions and relations by which these Persons are described and distinguished; and the truths of sub-

[1] Verification by experience has scientific validity. The *working value* of the trinitarian hypothesis affords a warrant for certainty as to its truth which would be considered in other spheres of investigation to be sufficient for the establishment of a scientific hypothesis. Cf. Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*, p. 196.

[2] 1 Cor. ii. 14. Cf. ch. ix. § 4, below.

ordination and circumcession, by a knowledge of which we are helped to distinguish the Persons without losing hold upon the truth of divine unity.

II. *Divine Processions and Relations*

§ 3. The distinction of Persons in God is based upon the divine processions,[1] which determine the manner in which each Person possesses the same indivisible essence.[2] Concisely stated, the doctrine of divine processions is that the Son, or Logos, proceeds by generation from the Father, and the Holy Ghost by spiration from the Father through the Son, ἐκ πατρὸς δι' υἱοῦ. Both of these processions are substantial, necessary, free from compulsion, eternal, perfect, immanent, and in each case unique and singular. By reason of them there is an eternal subordination of the Son to the Father, and of the Holy Spirit to the Father and the Son; but there is neither any temporal sequence of origin, nor any difference or inequality of essence.[3]

[1] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I. xxix. 4, says that "divine person signifies a relation of origin . . . in the divine nature."

[2] Richard Hooker says that "the Persons of that Trinity are not three particular substances to whom the *general* nature is common, but three that subsist by one substance which itself is particular, yet they all have it, and their several ways of having it are that which maketh their personal distinction": *Eccles. Polity*, V. lvi. 2.

[3] On divine processions at large, see St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I. xxvii; Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, §§ 101–104; Franzelin, *de Deo Trino*, Thh. xxv–xxxi; Schouppe, *Elem. Theol. Dogm.*, Tr. vi. §§ 135–150; R. Owen, *Dogm. Theol.*, ch. v. § 4; Bp. Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, arts. ii, viii; A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, pp. 116–124, 256–262.

When the processions are called *substantial* it is meant that they pertain to the very substance or essence of God, and constitute the mode of divine subsistence. That is, they are not, and cannot be, accidents of the divine substance; for the distinction between substance and accident has neither place nor meaning in the infinite essence of God. To describe the divine essence as it eternally is in itself includes an assertion of the divine processions and of the personal distinctions involved in them.[1]

These processions are *necessary* because they pertain to God's being what He is. It is the immutable nature of God to beget the Son and to spirate the Holy Ghost. It is true that the ancient fathers shrunk from describing the processions, in particular the generation of the Logos, as necessary, because in the use of terms then current, to speak of an operation as necessary conveyed the implication of constraint by some antecedent or external force or fate. God cannot be subject to constraint, for He is the self-sufficient First Principle and Cause of all, and in His essence He is absolute will.[2]

In view of such considerations the ancients did not hesitate to say that the Son is begotten *by the Father's will*.[3] This laid them open to the charge of making

[1] Schouppe, *op. cit.*, § 141; Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 323, 324.

[2] R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. pp. 261–263; St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I. xli. 2, 5. On the necessity of the processions, see Schouppe, *op. cit.*, § 142.

[3] See p. 61, above; and Petavius, *de Trin.* VI. viii.

the Son a creature, and it was appealed to by the Arians in support of their error. But these writers were misunderstood; and, among other evidences, their belief in the eternal nature of the Son's generation shows that they could have meant no more than to declare the essential spontaneousness and freedom from constraint of the Father's begetting the Son.

The processions are *eternal* because they are without either beginning or end, and co-terminous, so to speak, with the life of God. They constitute an ever living mystery; but are not to be regarded as at any time needing completion. Accordingly catholic writers employ both the present and the perfect tenses in describing them. That they are eternal is involved in their constituting the natural mode of subsistence of God, in whose essence the temporal has no place. The term Father, for instance, describes a fundamental fact of the divine essence; and, as has often been said, the Father cannot be thought of as ever having been without His Son; and the eternal existence of the Holy Spirit is not less necessary for the fulness of the Godhead.[1]

The processions are *perfect* because in them the divine essence is entirely communicated.[2] Inasmuch

[1] Origen was the first to elaborate the doctrine of eternal generation: *de Princip.* i. 2, 4 and elsewhere. See ch. iii. § 8, above. Cf. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. I. pp. 241–243; Bp. Bull, *Defence of the Nicene Faith*, Bk. III. ch. iii; Petavius, *de Trin.*, Lib. V. capp. 6–9. On the eternal nature of the processions, see Schouppe, *op. cit.*, § 143; A. P. Forbes, *op. cit.*, pp. 120–122; Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, p. 431.

[2] It is not meant that the Father's essence is made to change its

as that essence is indivisible, it cannot be partly communicated; and because it is infinite, it is not susceptible of enlargement. Therefore there can be no difference in quantity, so to speak, as between one of the divine Persons and the whole Trinity. The Persons are not parts of God, but are subsistences or selfs of one and the same divine substance or essence.[1]

The processions are *immanent*; which means that they do not operate beyond their source. Their *termini* are internal to their principle; and the divine Persons exist in, and contain, each other.[2] This last statement is the doctrine of circumcession, to which we shall return.[3]

Each of the processions is *unique* and *singular*. Neither of them can be adequately illustrated by any analogy, for no creaturely procession or production can be classed with either of them.[4] Neither of them

seat, so to speak. This meaning is sometimes read into the patristic assertion that the Father is *fons deitatis*, it being urged that He is rather *fons trinitatis*. Both phrases are true and signify the same mystery. The Father by eternal begetting makes the Son a coeternal and full participant of His essence, without division, extension, or reduction thereof.

[1] Schouppe, *op. cit.*, § 144.

[2] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, xxvii. 1, 3 (*Resp. dicend.*); Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. p. 317; Schouppe, *op. cit.*, § 140.

[3] In §§ 10, 11, below.

[4] Creaturely processions, St. Thomas says (*op. cit.*, I. xxvii. 1), are *ad extra*, whereas divine processions are *ad intra;* and they are not physical or corporeal, but intellectual, *secundum emanationem intelligibilem, utpote verbi intelligibilis a dicente quod manet in ipso.* Such a description is highly symbolical and accentuates the inscrutability and ineffability of divine processions. Cf. ch. viii. §§ 8–10, below.

is capable of repetition, for the eternal subsistences of God can suffer neither subtraction nor addition. As there is and can be but one Father, so there is and can be but one generation and Son begotten of Him; and there is and can be but one spiration and Holy Ghost who proceeds.

§ 4. The eternal distinctions, relations, and properties of the divine Persons are determined by the divine processions. In other words, the Persons are distinguished by the manner, whether original or derived, in which they exist (τρόποι ὑπάρξεως) and possess the divine essence.[1] The predications which by reason of the processions are used to describe and distinguish the Persons are called notions (ἔννοια). They are five, viz. innascibility or ingenerateness (*innascibilis*, ἀγένητος), paternity (*paternitas*, πατρότης), filiation (*filiatio*, υἱότης), spiration (*spiratio*, πνεῦσις), and procession (*processio*, ἐκπόρευσις).[2]

Of these notions, innascibility and paternity apply exclusively to the Father; filiation applies solely to the Son; spiration belongs principally to the Father, but derivatively to the Son; and procession, in the notional sense here employed, pertains only to the Holy Spirit. Thus we describe the Father as unorigi-

[1] Richard Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, V. lvi. 2: "Their several ways of having it [the divine substance] are that which maketh their personal distinction."

[2] On notions, see St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxxii. 2–4; Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, § 100; A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, p. 124; Schouppe, *op. cit.*, vi. §§ 154–158, 161. St. Thomas defines a notion as *propria ratio cognoscendi divinam personem.*

nate Source, who begets the Son and principally spirates the Holy Spirit. The Son is described as begotten of the Father, and as participating in the Father's spiration of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son.

It will be observed that four of these notions, all except innascibility, severally describe relations in which the Person to whom each is applied stands towards one or both of the other Persons. They are therefore called relations (*relationes*, σχέσεις).[1] Of these, paternity, or the relation of the Father to the Son, and spiration, or the relations of the Father and of the Son to the Holy Spirit, are active; and each signifies an eternal operation of production. The other two are passive relations and signify eternal reception, filiation describing the relation of the Son to the Father, and procession the relations of the Holy Spirit to the Father and to the Son.

Three of these notions are especially fitted, one being employed for each Person, to describe the characteristic manners in which the several Persons possess the divine essence, viz. paternity, filiation, and procession. Each is called a property (*proprietas*, ἴδίωμα, or ἰδιότης). Paternity characterizes the Father, filiation the Son, and procession the Holy Spirit.[2]

[1] On relations, see St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I. xxviii; Petavius, *de Trin.*, Lib. IV. *in premio;* R. Owen, *Dogm. Theol.*, ch. v. § 6.

[2] St. Gregory Naz., *Orat.*, xxv. 16, says, Ἴδιον δὲ πατρὸς μὲν ἡ ἀγεννησία υἱοῦ δὲ ἡ γέννησις, πνεύματος δὲ ἡ ἔκπεμψις. Cf. lxi. 9; and St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, Pref. On properties, see St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I. xl; Hooker, *op. cit.*, V. li. 1; R. Owen, *Dogm. Theol.*, ch. V. § 8;

For convenience of memory catholic writers have summarized these technicalities in a numerical series: there being one divine essence, two processions, three Persons and properties, four relations, and five notions.

§ 5. The ante-Nicene fathers employed the word generation, γέννησις, indifferently to describe four mysteries connected with the Son:[1] (*a*) His going forth to create the universe, whereby, having been λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, He became λόγος προφορικός;[2] (*b*) His becoming Son of Man by conception of the Blessed Virgin; (*c*) His resurrection from the dead;[3] (*d*) His eternal production from the Father, by reason of which He is the proper and only-begotten Son of God.[4]

R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. pp. 43, 253, 254; Schouppe, *op. cit.*, vi. §§ 159, 160; Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. p. 313.

[1] See R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. I. pp. 286–288; Newman, *Arians*, note 2.

[2] Tertullian speaks of the first creative fiat as also the perfect nativity of the Word, who had, however, already been in form (*conditus*) equal with the Father and peculiarly begotten, emitted from the Father's heart for the work of creation: *adv. Prax.*, vii. See Bp. Bull, *Defence*, Bk. III. prop. ii–iv; R. Owen, *Dogm. Theol.*, ch. vi. § 1; Newman, *Arians*, ch. II. iv. 5. Cf. p. 60, note 2, above.

[3] Cf. Psa. ii. 7, Sept. Version.

[4] Bp. Bull, *Defence*, Bk. III, *passim*. St. Athanasius, *c. Arian*, I. iv–vi, argues for the eternity of the Logos, therefore His eternal generation, on the basis of St. John, i. 1; Rev. i. 4; and Rom. ix. 5, 20; referring also to 1 Cor. i. 24; Heb. i. 3; St. John viii. 58. See *Nicene and Post-Nic. Frs.*, Vol. IV. p. 314, 2d col., note 4, for other patristic teaching; and Newman, *Select Treatises*, Vol. II. pp. 350–353. On the Son's eternal generation, see Bp. Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, pp. 238–253; R. Owen, *Dogm. Theol.*, ch. vi. § 2; A. P. Forbes, *Creed*, pp. 116–124; Petavius, *de Trin.*, V. vi–ix.

The Nicene and post-Nicene fathers usually confined their application of the term to His eternal production and to His human birth.[1] Furthermore, whereas the earlier writers freely spoke of the Son as begotten by the Father's will,[2] their successors were taught by experience with Arian sophistry to emphasize the truth that it belongs to the nature of the Father to generate.[3] They also employed the terms ἀγένητος and ἀγέννητος more guardedly than their predecessors had done, and described the Son as ἀγενήτως γεννητός, increately generate.[4] They described Him as γενητός only in relation to the human nature which He assumed of the Blessed Virgin. Inasmuch as He made human nature His own, He is spoken of in relation to that nature as γενητός, κτιστός and ποιητός, without there being involved any denial or obscuration of His increate nature and eternal generation.[5]

Amid all diversity of terminology, the doctrine that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, so that

[1] R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. p. 263.

[2] Petavius, *de Trin.*, VI. viii; Newman, *Arians*, ch. II. iii. 4 (corrective of Petavius); D. Waterland, *Second Vindication*, pp. 590–610. Cf. p. 61, above.

[3] St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, III. xxx. 59–67. The Arians said that if the generation is voluntary, the Son is a temporal creature; if involuntary, God is under compulsion. See Bethune-Baker, *Early Hist. of Doctrine*, pp. 194, 195; D. Waterland, *op. cit.*, pp. 572–590.

[4] References given in p. 60, note 1, above.

[5] See R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. pp. 263, 264, who refers to St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, I. 25, 60; II. 8, 12, 46. Cf. ch. v. § 2, above.

in the nature thus derived He is co-eternal, co-essential and co-equal with the Father, has been from the beginning the common belief of catholic writers of every school. If Origen formulated this belief with a definiteness which was new,[1] there is no evidence that he was considered by his contemporaries to have innovated upon the faith which had been handed down from the apostolic age.

Scriptural teaching as to the eternal nature of the Son's generation becomes apparent when we combine in one view the passages which describe the Logos as the Son of God, and as begotten of the Father, and those which teach His eternal existence and relation to the Father. Christ many times speaks of Himself in the Gospels as the Son of God;[2] and it was His claim to be this, and to be one with God, that caused

[1] *E.g.* in *de Princip.*, I. ii. 2, 4, 10, 11. He gives the thought that the Father, as such, must always have a Son. This is repeated by St. Dionysius Alex., *Ep. ad. Dion.*, 1; St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, III. xiii. 6; St. Gregory Nyss., *c. Eunom.*, I. 39. In *c. Arian.*, III. xxvii. 35, St. Athanasius says, "The Son hath eternally what He hath, yet He hath them from the Father." Cf. I. vi. 19; vii. 25. In II. xxi. 59, he says that in St. John i we are said to become sons of God because not so by nature, whereas Christ is.

[2] Note also His frequent use of the term Father in a way that implies proper sonship: *e.g.* St. John viii. 54; xvii. 1. On the title "Son of God," see Nolloth, *Person of our Lord*, ch. xii; V. Rose, *Studies on the Gospel*, ch. vi; W. Sanday, in Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *q.v.* Goodwin, in *Foundations of the Creed*, pp. 137–140, shows that our Lord's frequent use of the title "Son of Man" — avoided by other New Test. writers — indicates a divine standpoint, apart from which it is meaningless. On this title see S. R. Driver, in Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *q.v.*

the Jews to accuse Him of blasphemy.[1] The teaching of His parable of the wicked husbandmen who conspired to slay their master's son is perfectly plain.[2] And this teaching also appears in the words uttered by a voice from heaven at His baptism [3] and at His transfiguration,[4] "This is My beloved Son." St. Paul says that He was "declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead"; and that it was "His own Son" whom God sent into the world "in the likeness of sinful flesh."[5] Such teaching enables us to interpret in a sense confirmatory of our argument the passages which declare Christ to be "the Image of God,"[6] "the effulgence of His glory and the very image of His substance."[7] St. John clearly teaches that Christ is begotten of the Father,[8] and represents Him as thus describing Himself.[9] The words of the Psalmist, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee,"[10] are clearly messianic, and are cited by St. Paul and by the

[1] St. John x. 30, 36.

[2] St. Matt. xxi. 33–39; St. Mark xii. 1–9; St. Luke xx. 9–15.

[3] St. Matt. iii. 17; St. Mark i. 11; St. Luke iii. 22. Cf. St. John i. 34.

[4] St. Matt. xvii. 5; St. Mark ix. 7; St. Luke ix. 35. Cf. 2 St. Pet. i. 17.

[5] Rom. i. 4; viii. 3. Cf. Gal. iv. 4.

[6] 2 Cor. iv. 4; Col. i. 15. See J. B. Lightfoot, *Epis. to the Coloss.*, in ch. i. 15; Newman, *Select Treatises*, Vol. II. pp. 178–183.

[7] Heb. i. 3. See B. F. Westcott, *in loc.*

[8] St. John i. 14, 18; 1 St. John iv. 9. Cf. v. 1.

[9] St. John iii. 16, 18.

[10] Psa. ii. 7.

Epistle to the Hebrews[1] as applying to Christ; but they are made by St. Paul at least to refer to His resurrection rather than to His production from the Father.[2]

That the existence of the Son is an eternal fact, and has had no beginning, is as clearly taught in Scripture as is His being the proper Son of God and begotten of the Father. In the Old Testament His "goings forth" are said to be "from everlasting";[3] and it is said that the Lord possessed Him "in the beginning of His way," and that He was "set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."[4] Christ Himself said, "Before Abraham was I am;"[5] and St. John writes, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God."[6] St. Paul declares Him to be "before all things";[7] and in the *Apocalypse* Christ is represented as claiming to be Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last.[8] One who has received from the Father "to have life in Himself,"[9] to whom pertains all that the Father hath,[10] who exists in the form of God, so as

[1] Acts xiii. 33; Heb. i. 5; v. 5.

[2] See Westcott, on Heb. i. 5.

[3] Mic. v. 2.

[4] Prov. viii. 22, 23. On the controversial use of this text by the Arians, see ch. v. § 5, *init.*, above.

[5] St. John viii. 58.

[6] Ch. i. 1, 2.

[7] Col. i. 17. See J. B. Lightfoot, *in loc.*

[8] Revel. xxii. 13.

[9] St. John v. 26.

[10] St. John xvi. 16.

not to count it a prize to be on an equality with God,[1] and who is "the very image of His substance,"[2] can hardly be regarded as deriving His relationship to the Father from a temporal generation, or as otherwise than co-eternal with the Father.

§ 6. St. John declares our Lord to be the only-begotten Son of God;[3] and the truth that there is but one proper Son of God is an essential part of the doctrine of the generation of the Logos. That Christ is the only-begotten means that no other Person can claim *in the same manner* to be begotten of God.[4] It is not possible for us to explain the difference between the generation of the Son and the spiration of the Holy Ghost;[5] and the analogy of processions by intelligence and by love which is employed by catholic writers does not carry us very far. Yet a

[1] Phil. ii. 6. On the force of "being," ὑπάρχων, see Gifford, *Incarnation*, pp. 8–21; and the writer's *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 59, 60.

[2] Heb. i. 3. See Westcott, *in loc.*

[3] St. John i. 14, 18; 1 St. John iv. 9. Cf. St. John iii. 16, 18.

[4] On only-begotten meaning uniquely begotten, see Westcott, *Epp. of St. John*, pp. 169–172 (tracing patristic and creedal use); Bp. Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, pp. 52–58, 187, 188; F. Kaltenbusch, in Hastings, *Dic. of Christ*, *s. v.* "Only-Begotten." F. J. A. Hort, in *Two Dissertations*, I, argues for reading μονογενὴς θεός in St. John i. 18.

[5] On this subject, see St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxvii. 4; Petavius, *de Trin.*, VII. xiii, xiv; Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, pp. 252, 253; Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 300, 301, 328; Franzelin, *de Deo Trino*, Th. xxxi. St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, v. 15, contents himself with saying that the Holy Spirit is described not as begotten, but as given. The Cappadocians appealed to the case of Eve to show the possibility of other methods of origin of one person from another than that of generation.

very real difference is apparent in all the language of Scripture which bears upon the subject. This difference is especially accentuated by the teaching that the Holy Spirit receives what the Father hath from the Son,[1] which forbids the notion that His manner of production is like that of the Son. The fact that, although He receives from the Son, He proceeds from the Father,[2] will not permit us to conceive of Him as begotten of the Son, so as to be the Father's Grandson.[3]

The generation and sonship of the eternal Word is also unlike that attributed to men in relation to God. They are called sons of God by reason of creation,[4] because as rational spirits they are stamped with the image of their Maker,[5] and by virtue of their union with Christ, that is, by adoption and grace.[6] But nowhere in Scripture is any created person called "the Son of God." The sonship of the eternal Word is both unique and incommunicable. It is unique in that the essence of the Father is entirely communi-

[1] St. John xvi. 14, 15.

[2] St. John xv. 26.

[3] A point raised by Eunomius. See St. Basil, *c. Eunom.* l. v. Cf. Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. p. 300.

[4] 1 Cor. viii. 6. Cf. Gen, ii. 4; Job xxxviii. 28.

[5] Gen. i. 26, 27 (cf. ii. 7); Heb. xii. 9; Job xxxviii. 7; Acts xvii. 28; Mal. ii. 10; Isa. lxiii. 16.

[6] St. John iii. 3–8; Rom. viii. 14–17, 29; Gal. iv. 4–7; Ephes. i. 5, 6; Heb. ii. 13; 1 St. Pet. i. 3, 4; 1 St. John iii. 1, 2. See Bp. Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, art. i. pp. 47–50, 54; Hastings, *Dic. of Bib.*, *s.vv.* "Adoption"; "God, Children (Sons, Daughters) of"; "Sons of God."

cated to Him, without either division, multiplication or change; and it is incommunicable because no finite being can receive the infinite essence and attributes of God.[1]

§ 7. The Scriptures throw considerable light upon the mission and economic operations of the Holy Spirit in this world, and give abundant evidence of His distinct personality and divine rank in being; but they supply comparatively little direct information concerning the mystery of His eternal procession.[2] That He "proceedeth from the Father," παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται,[3] is declared by Christ; and His use of the present tense, considered in connection with scriptural teaching at large concerning the Person of the Spirit, certainly suggests that

[1] 2 St. Pet. i. 4, "that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature," does not mean literal deification, but enjoyment of incorruptible life and grace flowing from the divine nature through Christ. The same rule of interpretation should be applied to passages in St. Athanasius and others to the effect that the Son became human in order to make us divine: St. Athan., *de Incarn.*, 54. 3; *c. Arian.*, II, 70. Cf. St. Irenæus, *Haer.*, IV. xxxviii. 4. See Harnack, *Hist. of Dogm.*, Vol. II. p. 46, note. A good patristic treatment of the Son's unique generation is St. Cyril, Jerus., *Catech.*, xi. 7–14.

[2] On the eternal procession of the Spirit, see St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxxvi; H. B. Swete, *Hist. of The Doc. of the Process. of the Holy Sp.;* E. B. Pusey, *On the Clause 'And the Son';* Bp. Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, pp. 570–577; R. Owen, *Dogm. Theol.*, ch. vii. § 2; Perrone, *Praelec. de Trin.*, cap. v; Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, §§ 102 (III), 104 (VII); Hutchings, *Holy Ghost*, pp. 32–38, 277–279; *Cath. Encyc.*, *s. v.* "Holy Ghost," IV, V; Franzelin, *de Deo Trino*, Thh. xxxii–xli.

[3] St. John xv. 26.

He is describing an abiding relation, an eternal procession.[1]

Our Lord also teaches some kind of subordination of the Spirit to Himself, and in terms which were taken by ancient writers, both Eastern and Western, to imply that the Spirit eternally receives from the Son as well as from the Father. Of Him Christ says, "He shall glorify Me, for He shall take of Mine, and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine: therefore, said I, that He taketh of Mine, and shall declare it unto you," ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λαμβάνει, καὶ ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν.[2] Whether we interpret these words or not as affirming an eternal relation as well as an economic subordination pertaining to the temporal mission of the Spirit, the inference seems to be inevitable that only an eternal relation — some kind of eternal receiving by the Spirit from the Son of whatsoever the Father hath — can explain the economic prerogative of the Son to send the co-eternal and co-equal Spirit into the world. The Scriptures nowhere appear to disregard the order of eternal processions in describing the economic subordination and mission of a divine

[1] H. B. Swete, *Holy Spirit in the N. Test.*, p. 155, note 2, says the present tense "states the law of the Spirit's life." He does not, however, consider that the text demonstrably describes an eternal procession. It needs to be taken along with the general teaching of the New Testament.

[2] St. John xvi. 14, 15. Λαμβάνει can mean either to take or to receive. Modern exegetes prefer take. The subordination is apparent in any case.

Person.[1] This inference is confirmed by the fact that elsewhere the Spirit is called the Spirit of the Son,[2] and the Spirit of Christ;[3] there being no difference in the manner of expression as compared with the passages in which He is called the Spirit of God and of the Father.[4]

When the Macedonian heresy compelled the Fathers to define the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Father and the Son, they sought to keep as closely as possible to scriptural language.[5] Accordingly they showed a tendency, especially in the East, while employing the word "proceed" in describing the relation of the Spirit to the Father, to prefer the word "receive" in setting forth His relation to the Son, both relations being regarded, however, as eternal.[6] But St. Athanasius declares the Spirit to be the property of the Son according to His essence, *ἴδιον εἶναι κατ' οὐσίαν τοῦ υἱοῦ*;[7] and says, "such special relation as we know the Son hath to the Father, such we shall find that the Spirit hath to the Son."[8] "The Spirit is not external to the Word, but being in the Word is through Him in God."[9] That the

[1] Cf. pp. 259, 260, below.

[2] Gal. iv. 6.

[3] Rom. viii. 9; Phil. i. 19; 1 St. Pet. i. 11.

[4] *E.g.* St. Matt. xii. 28; x. 20.

[5] Because its meagreness on the subject gave them insufficient knowledge for a free choice of terms.

[6] The history of patristic thought on the subject is outlined in ch. iii. § 14, above.

[7] In *ad. Serap.* i. 25. Cf. H. B. Swete, *Hist.*, p. 91.

[8] In the same, iii. 1. Cf. i. 21.

[9] In the same, iii. 5. Pusey gives these and other quotations.

Eastern fathers of the Nicene period agreed with St. Athanasius in making the Holy Spirit to be essentially related to the Son in the mystery of eternal procession is abundantly clear from passages that can be quoted from Didymus of Alexandria, the Cappadocian theologians, Epiphanius, and especially St. Cyril of Alexandria.[1]

Early Western writers used greater freedom than the Eastern in asserting a procession of the Spirit from the Son as well as from the Father. Tertullian says, "*Spiritum non aliunde puto quam a Patre per Filium,*" *from* the Father *through* the Son.[2] St. Hilary of Poitiers, after saying in one part of his *de Trinitate* that "we must confess the Holy Ghost coming from the Father and the Son,"[3] at the end of the treatise addresses the Father, professing to adore with Him and the Son "Thy Holy Spirit who is from Thee through Thy Only-begotten."[4] St. Augustine and later Western writers ordinarily adopted language corresponding to the Nicene Creed as amended by the *filioque* clause, asserting that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father *and* the Son. Yet it is clear that St. Augustine did not consider the Son to be a co-ordinate and ultimate source of the Holy Spirit; and the *filioque* does not contain, or necessarily involve, a denial of the truth so dear to Easterns that the Holy

[1] See p. 234, note 1, below.
[2] *Adv. Prax.*, iv. Cf. viii.
[3] Bk. II. 29: *Qui Patre et Filio auctoribus confitendus est.*
[4] Bk. XII. 57.

Ghost proceeds *principaliter* and ultimately from the Father.[1]

[1] In *de Trin.*, v. 14: "It is to be confessed that the Father and the Son are the *principium* of the Holy Spirit: not two *principia;* but as the Father and the Son are one God . . . so in relation to the Holy Spirit They are one *principium.*" In *Tract. in S. Joan.*, xcix. 6, 7, he says that the Son's part in spirating He hath from the Father. In *de Trin.*, xv. 47, he says that the Holy Spirit proceeds *principaliter* from the Father.

As the *filioque* controversy is the only one which represents, or seems to represent, a divergence within the Catholic Church touching vital doctrine, it is worth while to bring together the more important statements on the subject (in addition to those already given) that are to be found in Eastern writers and in Synodical determinations.

Of the Eastern fathers, Didymus of Alexandria, in *de Spiritu Sancto* (extant in St. Jerome's Latin), § 37, says that "there is not any other substance of the Holy Spirit beside that which is given to Him from the Son," *a filio.* Cf. further citations in Pusey, *op. cit.*, pp. 118, 119. St. Basil, *de Spiritu Sanc.*, 17, says, "As the Son is related to, ἔχει πρός, the Father, thus the Spirit to the Son"; and, as H. B. Swete says, *op. cit.*, p. 101, he teaches "very distinctly and repeatedly that the Spirit is ἐκ θεοῦ δι' υἱοῦ." St. Gregory Nyss., *adv. Maced.*, 6, likens the Trinity to three torches, of which the second is lighted from the first and the third from the second (given by Swete, p. 102). In *Epis. ad Ablabium*, he says, "For the One exists immediately from the First, the Other" [the Spirit] "through Him who exists immediately from the First . . . and not excluding the Spirit from the natural relation to the Father" (more fully cited by Pusey, pp. 110, 111). Epiphanius explicitly asserts an eternal derivation of the Spirit from, ἐκ, the Son. He says, *Haer.*, lxii. 4, that the Holy Spirit is "not begotten, not created, not brother of the Son, not grandson of the Father, but ever proceeding from the Father and receiving from the Son: not alien from the Father and Son, but from, ἐκ, the same Essence, from, ἐκ, the same Godhead, from, ἐκ, the Father and the Son, ever subsisting . . . Spirit of Christ, Spirit of the Father. For it is the Spirit of the Father, Who speaketh in you, and My Spirit standeth in the midst of you, the third in appellation, . . . the bond of the Trinity," etc. Again, in *Ancoratus*, 73,

"And the Son and the Father are not, unless the Holy Spirit, who is from the Father and from the Son," ὁ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ. St. Cyril of Alexandria is equally explicit. In his 3d *Epis. ad Nestorium*, formally accepted by the 4th, if not also by the 3d, Ecum. Council, he says that the Spirit is not alien from the Son, "for He is named 'the Spirit of Truth,' and Christ is the Truth; and He is shed forth from Him, προχεῖται παρ' αὐτοῦ, even as He is also, of course, from, ἐκ, God the Father." In the ninth anathema he described the Spirit as the ἴδιον τοῦ υἱοῦ; and Theodoret assailed this language, denying that the Spirit is in any sense eternally derived from the Son. St. Cyril was not shaken from his position, but in an explanation submitted to the Council of Ephesus, *Explic. XII Capit.*, anath. 9, he described the Son as "being all that the Father is, save only being the Father, and having as His own the Holy Spirit, which is out of, ἐκ, Him and essentially existing in Him." Unfortunately the Council, while siding with St. Cyril against Theodoret on the main question, gave no explicit decision as to the derivation of the Spirit from the Son. (See Swete, p. 146, note 3.) Elsewhere, *In Johann.* Lib. II (cited by Pusey, pp. 131, 132), he says, "How shall we separate the Spirit from the Son, thus inexisting and essentially united, who cometh forth through Him and is by nature in Him, . . . who is His very own and is by nature poured forth from, παρ', Him." Other passages might be cited (see Pusey, pp. 126–136; and Swete, pp. 136–150).

The classic rank in the East of St. John Damascene's *de Fide Orthodoxa* gives especial historical importance to his language on the Holy Spirit. In the interests of the μοναρχία, he refuses to admit that the Spirit proceeds out of, ἐκ, the Son; but acknowledges that His procession from the Father is through, διά, the Son. In Bk. I. 12, he describes the Holy Spirit as "proceeding from the Father through the Son. . . . And we speak also of the Spirit of the Son, not as though proceeding from, ἐκ, Him, but as proceeding through δι', Him from, ἐκ, the Father; for the Father alone is cause." See Pusey, pp. 96–101; and Swete, pp. 202–204.

The language of the Council of Lyons has been elsewhere quoted (p. 95 (*d*), above), as repudiating two principles and two spirations. The definition adopted at Florence, 1439 A.D., contains the following language: "We the Greeks have declared that what we say, that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father, we do not say

If the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father *through* the Son, as is plainly confessed or implied in various statements made by Eastern fathers, He proceeds really, although in diverse manners, from both. That is, He proceeds from the Father and from the Son. No doubt this last phrase is undiscriminating, and can justly be criticised as failing to assert what needs to be asserted in such a connection — the priority of the Father in the mystery of spiration, as Fountain of Godhead.

The canonical questions involved in the *filioque* controversy lie outside the scope of this treatise,[1] and

with the intent of excluding the Son: but, because we thought that the Latins said that the Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son as of two Origins and two Spirations, we have abstained from saying that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. And we the Latins affirm that what we say, that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, we do not say in the sense of excluding the Father from being the Source of all Godhead, of the Son, that is, and the Holy Ghost: or that this, that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son, the Son hath not from the Father, or in the sense of affirming that there are two Sources or two Spirations; but we affirm that there is One sole Source and Only breathing of the Holy Ghost, as heretofore we have asserted." Given by Pusey, *On the Clause 'And the Son,'* pp. 104, 105.

Unhappily the Synod of Bethlehem (in language quoted on p. 95 (*f*), above) adopted language which *seems* to exclude any eternal derivation of the Spirit from the Son; and the attitude of the Easterns who attended the Conferences of Bonn, 1874 and 1875 A.D., seriously reduced the adequacy of the propositions which were there adopted. See Pusey, *op. cit.*, 182–184.

[1] The position taken by E. B. Pusey, *op. cit.*, and Thos. Richey, *Nicene Creed and the Filioque*, appears to be the correct one. G. B. Howard's *Schism between the Oriental and Western Churches* does justice neither to the real facts nor to the theological issues involved.

modern conditions have caused them to have only an academic interest. The *filioque* has come to serve in the West as a practically indispensable safeguard of two leading particulars of the catholic doctrine of the Trinity; and its abandonment, even in the interests of canonical regularity and reunion with the East, may not be permitted until sufficient provision has been made for a continued maintenance and assertion of the truths which the clause in question protects. These truths are the co-equality of the Son with the Father, obscured by modern and semi-pantheistic interpretations of the ὁμοούσιος; and the eternal relation of the Holy Spirit to the Son,[1] which, by reason of their controversial attitude in behalf of the Father's sole *principatus*, the Easterns are inclined to disregard.

The Easterns misunderstand the *filioque*, which indeed fails to bear explicit witness to the *principatus* of the Father, but which, neither in its own necessary meaning nor in the Western use of it, involves a denial of that truth. On the contrary, Western theology has continued to retain a place for it.

III. *Divine Monarchy*

§ 8. The distinction of Persons in the Godhead, and their eternal relations, are determined, as we

[1] Cf. R. C. Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, pp. 195–199. Some light is thrown upon the attitude of modern Easterns by a correspondence in the London *Guardian*, continued through several weeks of Dec., 1909, and Jan., 1910. A letter from W. J. Birkbeck in the issue of Jan. 28, p. 126, is especially valuable.

have seen, by the eternal processions — the generation of the Son and the spiration of the Holy Ghost. For a complete view of these distinctions and relations we have to reckon with the doctrines of subordination and circumcession: — the former exhibiting at once the unity in origin and the distinction in eternal order of the Persons, and the latter guarding the doctrine of subordination from Arian or unitarian misinterpretation.

The doctrine of subordination, or divine monarchy, is well summarized by Bishop Browne.[1] He says that the orthodox fathers held the eternal generation "to be a proof that He was of one substance and eternity with the Father; but the relation of the Father to the Son they held to constitute a priority of *order*, though not of *nature* or *power*. They held, that is, not that the Son was, in His nature as God, in any degree different from, or inferior to the Father; but that, as the Father alone was the source and fountain (πηγὴ, ἀρχὴ, αἰτία) of Deity, the Son having been begotten, and the Spirit proceeding, so there is a subordination without diversity of the

[1] *Thirty Nine Articles*, art. ii. On the doctrine at large, see Bp. Bull, *Defence of the Nicene Faith*, Bk. IV; Newman, *Tracts Theol. and Eccles.*, pp. 161, 167–191; St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxxiii. 1; xlii. 3; Schouppe, *Elem. Theol. Dogm.*, Tr. vi. § 174; A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, pp. 18, 140–143; Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 202 (note 1), 431, 432, 447; Bp. Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, pp. 59–73, 569, 570; R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. pp. 259–261; Suicer, *Thesaurus*, *s. vv.* αἰτία; ἀρχὴ; πηγή; the writer's *Doctrine of God*, Q. lxviii.

Son to the Father, and of the Spirit to the Father and the Son."[1]

(*a*) Several particulars are to be noted. In the first place, the principle of origin in the Trinity is absolutely one, and is seated in the Father. This truth is signified by the phrase, "*principatus* of the Father."[2] The other divine Persons proceed from Him, but He proceeds from none. Each divine Person is Θεός, for each possesses the divine essence, and without confusion contains the other two; but the Father is Αὐτόθεος.[3]

(*b*) This introduces the second particular, that neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit is Αὐτόθεος, for each derives His essence — His being God — from the Father. These two are God in a subordinate *manner*, although not in a subordinate *sense* of the word God.[4] That is, their being God is due to their proceeding from the Father; but they are as truly God as is the Father, because the very essence of the Father is fully and eternally Theirs. They are co-eternal and co-equal with God the Father.

(*c*) The third particular is that the same reason which compels us to regard the Son as second in the

[1] J. H. Newman, in St. Athan., *de Decretis*, § 26, note *h*, says, "By the Monarchy is meant the doctrine that the Second and Third Persons in the Ever-Blessed Trinity are ever to be referred in our thoughts to the First, as the Fountain of Godhead."

[2] Newman, *Tracts*, as above cited.

[3] Cf. D. Waterland, in *Second Vindication*, pp. 519, 520 (Van Mildert's ed. of *Works*).

[4] D. Waterland, *op. cit.*, p. 525.

eternal order of divine Persons requires us also to reckon the Holy Spirit as third. Inasmuch as He is related to the Son as the Son is to the Father,[1] and since He derives His essence from the Father through the Son, the Holy Spirit is subordinate to the Son as well as to the Father. In brief, the order in which the divine Persons are specified in the Name into which Christ commanded believers to be baptized is not accidental and meaningless, nor is its significance unimportant. It reveals to us an eternal order; and one by which our thoughts concerning the Trinity, and our lives in relation to the divine Persons, ought to be governed.

(*d*) Finally, we should remember that since this order pertains to Persons who eternally possess the fulness of the indivisible Godhead, it involves neither temporal sequence of origin nor inequality of essence, nature, or power.[2] As the Athanasian Symbol says, *In this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another; but the whole three Persons are co-eternal together and co-equal.*

The manner in which the Scriptures name the divine Persons implies the doctrine of subordination. The Father is necessarily prior in personal order to His Son and Spirit; the Son must be thought of as derived from His Father and as presupposed in His

[1] So St. Athanasius, *ad Serap.*, iii. 1, quoted in p. 232, above. On the subordination of the Spirit, see Hutchings, *Holy Ghost*, pp. 43, 44.

[2] D. Waterland, *Vindication*, Qq. xix, xx; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, Vol. I. pp. 327, 328.

Spirit; and the Spirit presupposes the Father and the Son of whom He is declared to be the Spirit. If at times the Persons are named in a different order,[1] the connection is such as to leave intact the truth of eternal monarchy and subordination; and the *principatus* of the Father is implied in the fact that when the Persons are mentioned together it is the Father alone to whom the name God is applied.[2] This is so because He is the fountain of Deity, and the other two Persons are God because They are derived from Him and participate in His essence. They are indeed given divine titles at times when separately mentioned,[3] lest we should be deceived as to Their co-equality with the Father; but none the less care is taken when the Father is mentioned with Them to protect His *principatus* from obscuration.

The doctrine which we are considering is also suggested by, and explains the fitness of, the subordination of the Son to the Father, and of the Spirit to the Father and the Son, in their economic operations and temporal missions. The Father is never spoken of as sent; whereas the Son is said to be sent by the Father, and the Spirit by the Father and the Son. But this subordination, while it fittingly corresponds to the eternal order of Persons, is merely economic, and is explained by the divine will and plan.[4] It does

[1] *E.g.* 2 Cor. xiii. 14; 1 St. Pet. i. 2.

[2] For examples, see p. 139, note 4, above.

[3] See ch. iv. §§ 11, 14 *fin.*, above.

[4] Cf. pp. 258–260, below.

not reveal an essential inequality of Persons; nor does it, of itself, demonstrate even the eternal subordination with which we are here concerned.

§ 9. The doctrine of subordination was formulated by Tertullian, as against the confusion of Persons which the patripassian error introduced.[1] Origen also enlarged upon it,[2] and his language was sophistically employed by Arians in their arguments against the doctrine of the Son's co-equality with the Father. It was not on that account, however, surrendered by the orthodox,[3] but was guarded by St. Athanasius and other Eastern writers from such misinterpretation by emphasis upon the doctrine of circumcession — a doctrine which we shall consider in the next section.

The doctrine of subordination was also acknowledged by St. Augustine.[4] But he paid little attention to it; and until comparatively recent times it has been somewhat neglected by Western writers,[5] to whose practical minds it has often seemed to be an

[1] See *adv. Prax.*, 3, 8, 9, 18, 19, 21, 30; Cf. Justin M., *Apol.*, I. 6, 13, 60; Athenagoras, *Plea for Christians*, 10, 12; St. Irenaeus, *adv. Haer.*, II. xxviii. 8. Tertullian was followed by Novatian, *de Trin.*, 16, 18, 26, 27.

[2] *De Princip.*, I. iii. 7, 8. Cf. ch. iii. § 8, above.

[3] St. Alexander of Alex., *Epis.* I. *ad Alex. Const.*, 12; St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, I. vi. 21; II. xix. 51; IV. 1–3; St. Hilary, *de Synod.*, v. 39; *de Trin.*, iv. 15; St. Basil, *c. Eunom.*, i. 25; *Homil. c. Sabell.*, 4; St. Greg. Naz., *Orat.*, xx. 7, xxix. 3.

[4] *de Trin.*, ii. 2, 3; iv. 29; v. 13, 15.

[5] It is acknowledged, however, by St. Thomas, and among our own writers, Bishops Pearson and Bull, Dr. Waterland, Bishops Browne and Forbes, and others have done justice to it, as the references given in the previous section show.

unnecessary subtlety, easily lending itself to Arian misapplication. The fact is, however, that, rightly understood, it guards both the distinction and the unity of the divine Persons; and its neglect weakens men's hold upon both of these truths. The doctrine of consubstantiality of the divine Persons, and of their existence in each other, easily lends itself to Sabellian use when the doctrine of subordination is disregarded. On the other hand, a correct understanding of this doctrine enables us to perceive the error of interpreting in an Arian sense the passages in the New Testament which teach the *principatus* of the Father. The true remedy for Arian misapplication does not lie in a surrender of the doctrine of subordination, nor even in ignoring it, but in correctly understanding and defining it. To evade this task is to yield the field to an Arian misuse of Scripture; for that some kind of subordination of the second and third Persons of the Trinity is there taught is obvious to all thoughtful Bible readers.[1]

§ 10. The doctrine of circumcession (*circumcessio*, *circumincessio*, *commeatio*, περιχώρησις, συμπεριχώρησις, περιεγχώρησις) or coinherence is to some extent the counter-truth of the doctrine of subordination. It asserts the existence of the divine Persons in each other without confusion of Persons, and the truth that in each Person we apprehend the fulness of

[1] On the patristic theology of subordination, see Bp. Bull, *Defence*, Bk. IV; Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 167–191; R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. pp. 259–261; Bright, *St. Leo on the Incarn.*, notes 116, 128.

God, the undivided Trinity. This doctrine is a necessary inference from the consubstantiality of the Persons, and from the truth that the divine processions are immanent [1] — that is, do not cause the Person who proceeds to be external to Him from whom He proceeds.[2]

This mystery is clearly taught in the New Testament. It is implied in our Lord's words to Philip, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."[3] Inasmuch as Christ habitually refers to the Father as to another Person, He cannot be understood here to be identifying His own Person with that of the Father. His meaning is made clear when He adds, "The words that I say unto you I speak not from Myself: but the Father abiding in Me doeth His work. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me."[4]

St. Paul explains why the Spirit searcheth the deep things of God by saying, "For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of God

[1] Cf. p. 220, above.

[2] On the doctrine of circumcession, see St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xlii. 5; Bp. Bull, *Defence*, IV. iv. 9–14; Petavius, *de Trin.*, IV. xvi; Bright, *St. Leo*, note 83; A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, pp. 81, 82; Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, p. 34, note g.; Archd. Wilberforce, *Holy Euch.*, pp. 222–227; J. H. Newman, *Select Treatises*, Vol. II. pp. 72–79; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, § 106; Perrone, *Praelec. de Trin.*, § 268; the writer's *Doctrine of God*, Q. lxvii.

[3] St. John xiv. 9.

[4] Verses 10, 11. Cf. i. 18 (The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father); x. 30; xvii. 21.

none knoweth, save the Spirit of God":[1] — the unexpressed implication being that the Spirit is in God. Elsewhere he describes the divine Persons as equally operating — cohering in action — in the work of grace. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all."[2] The work which he thus describes three times is in each description one and the same, and in referring it to the Spirit, to the Lord, and to God, he is clearly indicating that the special economy of the Spirit, of which he is speaking in the context, is not less the operation of the Son and of the Father, because economically referred to Him.

The fathers both East and West acknowledge the doctrine of circumcession. Commenting on the last passage which we have quoted from St. Paul, Origen says, "From which it clearly follows that there is no difference in the Trinity, but that which is called the gift of the Spirit is made known through the Son, and operated by God the Father."[3] St. Dionysius of Rome, writing to his namesake of Alexandria in the third century, says, "It is essential that the divine Word should be united to the God of all, and that the Spirit should abide and dwell in God; and thus that the Divine Trinity should be reduced and

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 11.
[2] 1 Cor. xii. 4–6.
[3] In *de Princip.*, I. iii. 7.

gathered into one, as if into a certain head."[1] In his reply St. Dionysius of Alexandria agreed that we may not sunder the divine Persons, saying, "We extend the Monad (μόνας) indivisibly into the Triad (τρίας), and conversely gather together the Triad without diminution into the Monad."[2] Rebutting the charge that he had denied Christ to be of one essence with God, he says, "For even if I argue that I have not found this word (ὁμοούσιον) nor read it anywhere in the Holy Scriptures, yet my subsequent reasonings, which they have suppressed, do not disagree with its meaning."[3]

As was to be expected in view of his earnest contention for the doctrine of consubstantiality, St. Athanasius asserted the doctrine of περιχώρησις in plain terms. In an important passage[4] he interprets both negatively and positively our Lord's words, "I in the Father and the Father in Me";[5] and shows that they are not in each other as filling a vacancy; nor as God is in His saints; nor in the sense of the passage, "In Him we live and move and have our being";[6] nor because the Son's teaching and works are the Father's; but because, "whereas the Form and Godhead of the Father is the Being of the Son, it follows that the Son is in the Father and the Father

[1] Fragment in St. Athan., *de Decretis*, xxvi.
[2] Quoted by St. Athanasius, *de Sent. Dion.*, xvii.
[3] *Ibid.*, xviii.
[4] In *c. Arian.*, III. xxiii.
[5] St. John xiv. 10.
[6] Acts xvii. 28.

in the Son." "He added 'I in the Father and the Father in Me,' by way of showing the identity of Godhead and the unity of essence. For They are one, not as one thing divided into two parts,[1] . . . nor as one thing twice named, so that the Same becomes at one time Father, at another His own Son,[2] . . . but they are two, because the Father is . . . not also Son, and the Son is . . . not also Father; but the nature is one . . . And so . . . the same things are said of the Son which are said of the Father, except His being said to be Father." A little further on he adds that "the fulness of the Father's Godhead is the Being of the Son, and the Son is whole God."[3] In his *Letters to Serapion*[4] he says, "When the Father is mentioned, His Word is with Him, and the Spirit who is in the Son. And if the Son be named, in the Son is the Father, and the Spirit is not external to the Word."

St. Augustine says that "in corporeal things one thing alone is not as much as three together, and two are something more than one; but in that highest Trinity one is as much as the three together, nor are two anything more than one. And They are infinite in Themselves. So both are in each, and all in each, and each in all, and all in all, and all are one."[5]

[1] It was this interpretation of ὁμοούσιος by Paul of Samosata that caused the rejection of that term at Antioch in the third century.

[2] The Sabellian error.

[3] St. Athanasius here plainly implies that the Son is ὁμοούσιος with the Father in the sense of identity of essence.

[4] *Ad Serap.*, i. 14.

[5] In *de Trin.*, vi. 12. Cf. i. 7, 19, 25; iv. 30; vi. 8, 9; vii. 11; ix. 8; etc.

co-inherence

§ 11. The doctrine of circumcession involves the truth of the following propositions: (*a*) The Persons mutually interpenetrate, so that each is in the other two; (*b*) Each Person contains the other two; (*c*) The essence which all possess is not exceeded in substantial content by any one of the Persons in which it subsists; (*d*) The Trinity is not a larger entity, so to speak, than one of the Persons separately considered. Each Person is whole God. But these propositions must not be interpreted so as to nullify the distinction of Persons, which is indeed implied when we say that *one* Person is in *another*.[1] The Father is not the Son, nor is the Son the Father; the Son is not the Spirit, nor is the Spirit the Son; and the Father is not the Spirit, nor is the Spirit the Father; although each is in the other two, as the light of three torches in one room interpenetrate although the torches are three.[2]

The value of this doctrine can be seen when we observe that it helps to protect other and vital truths from perversion and neglect.

(*a*) As has been shown, it is the counter truth of the doctrine of subordination, and prevents us from misapplying that doctrine in the manner of the Arians; for if each Person contains the fulness of God, the derivative manner in which the Son and the Holy Spirit are divine does not lower the sense in which we acknowledge Them to be very God.

[1] See Bp. Bull, *op. cit.*, IV. iv. 14, p. 653.

[2] An illustration given by pseudo-Dion. Areop., *Div. Names*, ch. ii.

(*b*) Since each Person is whole God, each can be worshipped without polytheism, and without danger of creature-worship.

(*c*) The divine essence cannot be the source or cause of operations from which any one of its full Possessors are or can be excluded, so as not to be worker of them. St. Augustine says "that the operation of the Trinity is also inseparable in each severally of those things which are said to pertain properly to the manifesting of either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit."[1] In brief, no one of the several economies of the divine Persons excludes any one of these Persons from being cause thereof.[2]

(*d*) Whatever Christ and the Holy Spirit have done and are doing for us is to be referred to God — to whole God — as its Author. It is God in Christ who is reconciling the world to Himself, and the grace of the Holy Spirit is the grace of God, the Three in One.

[1] In *de Trin.*, iv. 30.
[2] Cf. pp. 251, 252, below.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ECONOMIC TRINITY

I. *In General*

§ 1. Thus far we have been considering the divine Persons in their essential and eternal relations to each other. But these Persons have relations to the universe and to mankind: — relations which arise from voluntary dispensations of creation, redemption, and sanctification, although determined by the essential relations of which we have been treating. The divine Persons, therefore, can be regarded in two ways: — as facing inward, so to speak, towards each other; and as facing outward, towards Their creatures. To put this in another way, They may be regarded essentially and economically.

The phrases "Essential Trinity" and "Economic Trinity" embody this distinction between the inward and the outward aspects of the Trinity; and when we speak of the Economic Trinity we mean the Trinity in those aspects in which the divine Persons manifest Themselves in history.[1] It was the error of the ancient patripassians and Sabellians that they confined the distinction of Persons in God to the

[1] Martensen, *Christ. Dogmatics*, §§ 54, 57, 58; Dorner, *Christ. Doctrine*, Vol. II. pp. 9–20.

Economic Trinity, and refused to acknowledge those internal and eternal distinctions which are signified by the phrase "Essential Trinity." They regarded the names Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as denoting merely so many aspects, manifestations, and operative dispensations of one and the same Person. Each might indeed be called a person, πρόσωπον, but only in the etymological sense of face or manifestation.[1] The catholic and biblical doctrine requires us to acknowledge both the economic and the eternal aspects of the Trinity; and we have to interpret the Economic Trinity as presupposing, and as determined by, eternal and personal distinctions in the divine essence itself.

The phrase "divine economies," used in this connection, signifies the particular dispensations and operations which revelation teaches us to attribute to the several divine Persons. In the *Church Catechism*, our children are taught to say, "First, I learn to believe in God the Father, *who hath made* me, and all the world. Secondly, in God the Son, *who hath redeemed* me, and all mankind. Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, *who sanctifieth* me, and all the people of God." These words express the truth that the operations of creation, redemption, and sanctification are in a special sense to be attributed to distinct Persons.

This may not, however, be taken to mean that the Father is exclusively the Cause of creation, the Son alone the Cause of redemption, and the Holy Spirit

[1] Cf. pp. 65, 67, 68, above. See Tertullian, *adv. Prax.*, xiii.

the sole personal Cause of sanctification; for, as has elsewhere been shown, the divine Persons coinhere in action as well as in essence, and indivisibly operate in all things.[1] It means simply that special relations are revealed in each case between the Persons who are named and the operations which are attributed to Them, relations which are sufficiently distinctive to justify such manner of speech. All the Persons operate indivisibly, but the manner in which each Person operates is distinct.

The distinction between the divine economies is suggested and determined not only by the peculiar relations which the several divine Persons necessarily have — because They are essentially distinct — towards their common operations; but also by the several relations in which, according to revelation, we ourselves stand towards each of Them. These relations constrain us to contemplate the Father in relation to creation and the natural order; the Son in relation to the supernatural revelation and dispensation of redemption; and the Holy Spirit in relation to inspiration and sanctifying grace. Yet we are neither prohibited nor permitted on this account to exclude any divine Person from being Cause of any divine operation. We must at once acknowledge the distinction of divine economies and the indivisible operation of the divine Persons in all Their external works.

§ 2. The word economy, *οἰκονομία*, originally sig-

[1] St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, iv. 30, quoted in p. 249, above.

nified the management of a household, and it was anciently applied at large to the stewardship and dispensation of revenues in accordance with a preconceived plan. In the New Testament the word occurs in seven passages,[1] and signifies either a stewardship or a dispensation — plan of administration of the household of God, the Church. In the latter sense the οἰκονομία constitutes a dispensation of grace,[2] and of truth or faith;[3] and has the Incarnation as its central feature.[4] The dispensers of grace and truth, the ministers of Christ, are by St. Paul called οἰκονόμοι, stewards. "Let a man so account of us as of ministers of Christ, and stewards, οἰκονόμους, of the mysteries of God."[5]

Following St. Paul, the early fathers used the word as meaning dispensation. In this sense they described the Incarnation itself as the οἰκονομία; and extended their application of the term to signify that part of theology which treats of the Incarnation.[6]

[1] St. Luke xvi. 2–4; 1 Cor. ix. 17; Ephes. i. 10; iii. 2; iii. 9; Col. i. 25; 1 Tim. i. 4.

[2] Ephes. iii. 2.

[3] 1 Tim. i. 4. Cf. St. John i. 17.

[4] Ephes. iii. 10. Cf. Lightfoot, *Epp. of St. Paul*, p. 319.

[5] 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. Cf. Tit. i. 7; 1 St. Pet. iv. 10.

[6] On patristic usage, see Lightfoot, *Apost. Fathers*, Pt. II. Vol. II. p. 75 (on St. Ignatius *ad Ephes.*, xviii); R. L. Ottley, *Incarn.*, Vol. II. p. 245; J. H. Newman, *Arians*, pp. 49–89; Suicer, *Thesaurus*, *s.v.* οἰκονομία; C. Bigg, *Christ. Platonists*, p. 166, note. The fathers incidentally used the word to describe the method of reserve discoverable in divine revelation; and consequently also the ecclesiastical *disciplina arcani*, or cautious unfolding of Christian mysteries to catechumens. Newman, *Arians*, ch. I. iii.

Tertullian[1] and Hippolytus[2] appropriated the term to describe the distinct relations of the divine Persons in the Godhead.

This use of the word passed away, but has perhaps suggested the modern use with which we are concerned in this chapter; which combines the application of the term to the divine Persons with its more common meaning of dispensation. That is, it signifies the several dispensations or methods of operation which in Scripture are attributed to the several divine Persons. It does not refer to the eternal relations, as with Tertullian, but to external operations and manifestations. The "Economic Trinity" is the Trinity regarded in external and temporal manifestation.

§ 3. The distinction between divine economies, or the distribution to particular Persons of operations which belong to the entire Trinity, is a branch of what is called appropriation, κόλλησις. The mode of divine subsistence (τρόπος ὑπάρξεως) requires, and the method of divine self-manifestation (τρόπος ἀποκαλύψεως) teaches us to acknowledge, certain differences in our relations to the several divine Persons, and in Their relations to Their common essence and attributes, and, as we have been explaining, to Their common operations. Appropriation is based upon these differences, and is the practice of distributing to particular Persons in the Trinity certain names,

[1] In *adv. Prax.*, ii.
[2] In *c. Noet.*, viii.

attributes, and operations which, by reason of the consubstantiality of the divine Persons, belong to Them all.[1] Connected with appropriation, although distinct from it, are certain differences in terms and phrases which have to be observed in describing the distinct part of each Person in the divine economies.[2]

(*a*) Of the divine names, "God" is used in the New Testament with particular reference to the Father;[3] because the Godhead has its primary and underived subsistence in Him, and He is the fountain of Deity.[4] The name "Lord," on the other hand, is appropriated to the Son, as the Only-begotten Heir,[5] and as the Person to whom all authority is given,[6] and who is the Head of the Church,[7] preeminent in all things.[8] There is no corresponding appropriation to the Holy

[1] On appropriation, see St. Augustine, *de Vera Relig.*, *fin;* St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxxix. 7, 8; Petavius, *de Trin.*, VIII. iii. 1; R. Owen, *Dogm. Theol.*, ch. v. § 8; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, § 107; Vacant, *Dic. Théol. Cath.*, *s.v.* "Appropriation aux personnes"; *Cath. Encyc.*, *s.v.* "Appropriation"; Franzelin, *de Deo Trino.*, Thh. xii, xiii.

[2] Thus the second and third persons only may be said to be sent; and the Son alone is incarnate.

[3] *E.g.* St. John i. 1; 1 Cor. xii. 4–6; 2 Cor. i. 3; xi. 31; Ephes. i. 3; iv. 4–6; 1 St. Pet. i. 3. Cf. pp. 139, 140, above.

[4] Cf. ch. vii. § 8, above.

[5] Heb. i. 2. Appropriations of "Lord" to the Son are very numerous in the New Testament. The texts referred to in next to the last note afford critical examples.

[6] St. Matt. xxviii. 18.

[7] Ephes. v. 23; Col. i. 18.

[8] 1 Cor. xi. 3; Col. i. 17; ii. 10; Heb. i. 8, 9.

Spirit; but He is habitually described by His proper personal name, "The Spirit."

(*b*) Of divine attributes, those which especially signify a negation of origin and of comprehensibility, such as eternity, invisibility, and ineffability, are apt to be appropriated to the Father,[1] because He alone is underived from another Person, and is revealed only through the Son and in the Holy Spirit. Unity, truth, and holiness are respectively appropriated to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;[2] and the same is the case with power, wisdom, and love.[3]

(*c*) We have already seen that the operations of creation, redemption, and sanctification are appropriated in the same manner; and in relation to these economies the will and the purpose are appropriated to the Father,[4] revelation to the Son,[5] and illumination and inspiration to the Holy Spirit.[6] In regard to causation, divine operations and gifts are said to be *of* or *from* the Father, *through* the Son, and *in* or *by* the Holy Spirit. The moving cause is the Father's will, the mediating cause or Agent is the Son, and the efficient and perfecting cause is the Holy Spirit. In describing the worship of God, we speak of worship-

[1] St. John i. 18; Col. i. 15; 1 Tim. i. 17; vi. 16.

[2] Cf. 1 Tim. ii. 5 with St. John xiv. 6 and Rom. i. 4.

[3] Cf. St. Luke xxii. 69 with 1 Cor. i. 30 and Gal. iv. 6. On the appropriation of wisdom to the Son, see St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, vii. 4, 5.

[4] St. John vi. 38; 1 Tim. ii. 4; Heb. x. 7.

[5] St. Matt. xi. 27; St. John i. 18; Heb. i. 2.

[6] 1 Cor. xii. 8; 2 St. Pet. i. 21.

ping the Father *through* His Son and *by* or *in* the Holy Spirit; and this use of language, which determines the liturgical forms of the Church, leaves untouched the truth that "we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity."

These various appropriations are controlled by the doctrine of processions and divine monarchy; and are justified both by the several and distinctive relations in which the Persons stand to what They have in common, and by the peculiar manner in which each Person is made known to us. They are of great practical value, because they enable us readily and safely to distinguish the Persons, and thus to perceive the particular relation in which we stand to each of Them.

Holy Scripture not only appropriates to particular Persons what, essentially speaking, pertains to the whole Trinity, but also describes the second and third Persons in terms that cannot be appropriated consistently with truth to any other Person than Him to whom they are there applied. Thus the Son alone is rightly called Mediator [1] between God and man, because He alone has assumed our nature so as to unite the Godhead and the Manhood in His own Person. This reason justifies the practice of attributing human titles such as "Son of Man," human attributes, and human experiences and limitions to Him; [2] but we may not appropriate them to

[1] 1 Tim. ii. 5. Cf. Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15; xii. 24.

[2] Cf. ch. v. § 2, above. Human attributes are not applied to His

the other Persons, because He alone is God-incarnate. There are also the predications which we make in connection with "divine mission." This subject requires another section for its treatment.

§ 4. The New Testament in various places speaks of divine Persons being sent into the world, and of Their being given to men — the Son by the Father, and the Holy Spirit by the Father and the Son. Theology has generalized the teaching of these passages, with due regard for their contexts and for the general teaching of Scripture concerning the divine Persons, and has formulated the results of this induction in the doctrine of divine mission. In concise terms, divine mission is the procession of one Person from another in relation to a temporal economy and effect.[1]

The term procession is here employed in a special and economic sense — one which is in line with its use to describe the eternal derivation of the Son from the Father and of the Holy Spirit from the Father

Godhead, but to His Person. To speak of Him under a divine personal title as under human limitations is not an exception; for the title signifies the Person — not the nature from which it is derived. This is the doctrine of the communication of idioms, of which we expect to treat in our sixth volume. It is perverted in modern German theology, and often misunderstood by our own critical writers.

[1] On mission, see St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xliii; Petavius, *de Trin.*, VIII; A. P. Forbes, *Nicene Creed*, pp. 124, 125; *Thirty Nine Arts.*, I. pp. 19–21; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, § 108; Franzelin, *de Deo Trino*, Th. xlii–xlviii; Schouppe, *Elem. Theol. Dogm.*, Tr. vi. §§ 166–173.

and the Son, but which should not be confused with that meaning of the term. It has to do with what is temporal, economic, and relative.[1]

Our Lord declared Himself to have been sent into the world by His Father. "I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of Myself, but He sent Me."[2] He also taught that the Father was to send the Holy Spirit in His name;[3] and claimed Himself to have part in this sending.[4] The Father is nowhere said to be sent, but comes with His Son to abide in those who love Him.[5]

It is noticeable that the divine missions or temporal processions, wherever they are mentioned in the New Testament, appear to be in line with the eternal processions, which invariably determine divine economies. The Son is sent and given by the Father, rather than by the Holy Spirit, because He eternally proceeds from the Father; and the Holy Spirit is sent and given by the Father and the Son, because He eternally proceeds from both. The Father sends and gives, but is not sent or given, for the other Persons eternally proceed from Him and He proceeds from none. Mission is an aspect of the divine econo-

[1] See ch. vi. § 13 (ii), above — esp. p. 209, note 1.

[2] St. John viii. 42. Cf. vi. 57; xiv. 24; Gal. iv. 4; and the parable of the wicked husbandmen, St. Matt. xxi. 33–37. Cf. also the mention of the Father *giving* the Son: St. John iii. 16; Eph. i. 22.

[3] St. John xiv. 26. Cf. 1 St. John iv. 13; Gal. iv. 6.

[4] St. John xv. 26. Cf. Acts ii. 33. That the Holy Spirit is *given*, see Acts xv. 8; Rom. v. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 8; 1 St. John iii. 24.

[5] St. John xiv. 23.

mies and these are determined by the eternal processions.[1]

Neither the processions nor the economies involve any essential inequality of Persons; and the economies are explained by will and purpose, pertaining to the entire Trinity,[2] and not violating the law that the three Persons coinhere in action and operate indivisibly in everything.[3] Yet the distinction of missions represents a real difference between the relations of the several Persons to the temporal ends and effects which we are considering. Therefore the predications which are made in relation to divine missions are personal and notional.[4] They may not be transferred either to another Person, or to the whole Trinity.

If there is no inequality and no mutual separation of Persons involved in divine mission, so also there is neither any spatial movement nor change on the divine side to be inferred therefrom. The spatial and temporal aspects of mission are economic and pertain wholly to the effects. When a divine Person is said to be sent and to come into the world, this does not mean that He becomes present where He has previously been absent; but it signifies that He reveals His presence in the world in a new manner

[1] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I. xliii. 4, 8; St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, iv. 27, 28.

[2] D. Waterland, *Second Vindication*, p. 516.

[3] Tertullian, *adv. Prax.*, xxiii. Cf. pp. 249, 251, 252, above.

[4] Schouppe, *op. cit.*, Tr. vi. § 168.

and by a new temporal effect.[1] Moreover, the novelty of the effect does not require us to suppose a change in God; for the divine will and operations, like the divine essence, are eternal and immutable. But, although God does not and cannot change His will, He can and does will changeable effects, and we can properly describe His operations in terms borrowed from these effects. The whole terminology of mission is to be regarded in this light. It is not employed to describe divine operations in their own nature, for that is ineffably mysterious and transcends any human description.[2]

Divine mission is distinguished into external and internal mission. It is called *external* when its effects are visible to human senses, and *internal* when these effects consist of invisible workings of grace in human souls. The external mission of the Son is revealed in His taking our nature into Himself and in manifesting Himself in the flesh as Revealer and Redeemer. The Gospels describe this mission, and its explication pertains to that part of Dogmatic Theology which is called Christology.[3] The Son's internal mission is the fruit of His assumption of our nature; and is

[1] St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, iv. 36. Cf. St. John iii. 13. Rejection on critical grounds of the specific phrase, "which is in heaven," leaves this implication of the passage unaffected. See *Kenotic Theory*, pp. 133, 134.

[2] St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I. xliii. 2, *ad* 2.

[3] To be treated of in Vols. VI, VII, of this series. On the distinction between external and internal mission, see St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, I. xliii. 3, 5–7; Wilhelm and Scannell, *op. cit.*, § 108, IV. *et seq.*

His being imparted to us, and His working in us, by means of the nature which He has assumed, through the instrumentality of His mystical body and sacraments of grace, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and on the condition of our faith and repentance.[1]

The external mission of the Holy Spirit is exhibited by His descent as a dove upon Christ,[2] by His hovering as a bright cloud over the Mount of Transfiguration,[3] by His being imparted through the breathing of Christ,[4] and especially by His descent upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost in a mighty wind and in cloven tongues of fire.[5] These appearances were all symbols, whereas the Son manifested Himself in His own proper flesh. Therefore to speak of the Spirit's external mission is to use metaphorical phraseology, although it is justified by the fact that in each case the symbols were real signs of the Spirit's mission and special presence. The internal mission of the Spirit is revealed in the whole mystery of sanctifying grace. It is based upon His being given to dwell in us [6] as in a temple,[7] and upon His working for our enlightenment and sanctification as an Advocate [8] sent by the Father and the Son, who has

[1] Gal. ii. 20; iv. 19; Ephes. iii. 17; and elsewhere.
[2] St. Matt. iii. 16; St. Mark i. 10; St. Luke iii. 22; St. John i. 32.
[3] St. Matt. xvii. 5; St. Mark ix. 7; St. Luke ix. 34.
[4] St. John xx. 22.
[5] Acts ii. 2–4.
[6] Acts ii. 38; viii. 15, 18; xix. 2–6.
[7] 1 Cor. vi. 19.
[8] St. John xv. 26.

created the Church, making it to be the mystical body of Christ,[1] and who abides in that body in order to make it the home of truth and grace.[2]

II. *The Persons Described*

§ 5. The rest of this chapter will be devoted to a concise and comprehensive summary of what revelation teaches concerning each divine Person,[3] and to a description of some of the chief illustrations and analogies of the Trinity.

The proper title of the first Person is that of Father. But this title is applied not only to the first Person in distinction from the other two, but also to the Supreme Being without reference to personal distinctions in the Godhead.[4] As thus used it implies one or other of several relations to creatures. God is Father (*a*) of all creatures as their Maker; (*b*) of mankind as Governor and Provider of every good which we enjoy; (*c*) of mankind, again, because we are made in the image of God in order to develop

[1] Ephes. i. 22, 23.

[2] Among other passages on the internal mission of the Spirit are Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27; xxxvii. 9–14; xxxix. 29; Joel ii. 28–32 (cited in Acts ii. 17, 18); Rom. v. 5; Gal. iv. 6; 1 Cor. xii. H. E. Manning's *Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost;* and *Internal Mission of the Holy Ghost;* and Hutching's *Holy Ghost* will be found valuable.

[3] In so far as matters already treated of are recapitulated, and matters to be dealt with more fully in future volumes are anticipated, references will to some extent be omitted.

[4] See *Being and Attributes of God*, ch. x. § 2 (*e*), on the name "Father,"

after His likeness and enjoy filial relations with Him; (*d*) of the chosen people as subjects of special and fatherly dealings; (*e*) of the members of Christ by adoption and grace, through our union with His proper and only-begotten Son.[1]

When applied to the first Person in distinction from the other two, the name Father signifies what is comprehended in the notions of innascibility, paternity, and spiration. His innascibility constitutes Him Father in a unique and absolute sense. Being underived from another Person, He is the ultimate source of the mystery of personal production. He is *the* Father, for He has no Father of Himself but is the principle of all fatherhood. Consequently He is properly called the fountain (πηγὴ, ἀρχὴ, αἰτία) of Deity. And this explains the appropriation of the name God to Him, even when the other divine Persons are mentioned with Him, as well as the practice above mentioned of using the name Father as equivalent to the Supreme Being. The Son and the Holy Spirit are each full Θεός, but He is without personal derivation — Αὐτόθεος.

The personal notions of paternity and spiration describe the fact that the Father begets the Son and spirates the Holy Spirit, in an eternal mystery that inheres in the divine nature. It is contrary to the nature of the Father ever to be without His Son and Holy Spirit; and yet the operation of generation and spiration must be regarded as free and spontane-

[1] Cf. p. 229, above.

ous, for there can be no manner of opposition between essence and will in the Divine Being.

For a reason similar to that which justifies our appropriating the name God to the Father, we also appropriate to Him the attributes which especially signify or suggest self-existence and remoteness from creaturehood, such as eternity, invisibility, and ineffability; also the attributes of unity and almightiness.

In relation to economies and missions, the divine will and purpose which they reveal is appropriated to the Father, because He is the ultimate source, economically speaking, of every external operation. They all flow from Him, and the times and seasons are in His power. His will is the moving cause of all. Accordingly, the economy of creation is appropriated to Him, although every divine Person is essentially Creator, and the natural order is especially referred to His providential operation.

Our relations to the Father are those of children: — whether as comprehended in a universe which He has created, or as being subjects with all mankind of His providence and paternal goodness, or as regenerate children by adoption and grace through union with His proper and only-begotten Son.

From our natural relations to the Father springs the blessed fact of the common brotherhood of mankind, just as from our relation to the Son is derived the mystery of a supernatural and special Christian brotherhood; and the common brotherhood makes

possible the Christian brotherhood, by being at once the source of its membership and the sphere of its overflowing love and impartial extension.

We refer all natural and temporal blessings to the Father, and by His love we explain the whole dispensation of mercy and grace which has been revealed and achieved through Christ and by the Holy Spirit. To the Father we hold ourselves ultimately to be accountable, and it is to Him, through the Son and by the Holy Spirit, that our worship is liturgically directed.

In brief, He is the first Person in the Godhead in relation both to what is eternal and to what is dispensational and economic. So that to Him especially we appropriate the title Supreme Deity, although in His Godhead there exist two other Persons who are co-essential, co-eternal, and co-equal with Him,[1] and whom together with Him we worship and glorify without abatement or reserve — "one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity."[2]

§ 6. The primary title of the second Person is that of Son — the only-begotten Son of God. The contemplation of our own relation to God as His children helps us to apprehend the meaning of this title, but the contrast between His sonship and ours is very great. We are sons of God by creation, whereas

[1] As has been said, each Person is full Θεός, but He alone is Αὐτόθεος.

[2] On the doctrine of the Father at large, see St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxxiii; Petavius, *de Trin.*, Lib. V; Bp. Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, art. i; W. N. Clark, *Can I Believe in God the Father?*

He is co-eternal with the Father and uncreate; we are children of God by adoption and grace, whereas He is by nature the proper Son of God, being eternally begotten of Him, and possessing as His own the very essence and nature of God. Moreover, our highest filial relation to God — the one which is most nearly akin to His — is not intrinsic, but arises from our incorporation into His body by redeeming grace.

The relation between a human father and son affords the best creaturely analogy of the relation between the divine Father and Son, and from this analogy the title Son of God is derived. But the analogy is imperfect, and the title, proper though it be when rightly understood, is symbolical. The begetting of a human son involves a division of parental substance, and an external separation between father and child; but the divine substance or essence is indivisible, so that the whole essence of the Father is communicated to, and possessed by, the Son; and inasmuch as the Father and the Son are Selfs of one and the same indivisible essence, there can be no mutual separation between Them. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son. Again, human sonship involves temporal sequence in origin of father and son; whereas the begetting of the Son of God is eternal, and He is co-eternal with the Father. Once more, a human son is begotten in a state of partial development, and has to grow before he can attain to the full manhood of his father; whereas the Son of God possesses from all eternity

the irreducible fulness of His Father's Godhead. Finally, a human begetting constitutes a passing beginning of sonship, and one which is subsequently to be regarded as a past event; whereas the generation of the Son and His Sonship are alike eternal and are coincident. We say that the Son *is*, rather than *has been*, begotten. An endless, yet ever complete, generation distinguishes the sonship of the second Person of the Trinity — a relation wholly unique.

All things that the Father hath, except His being Father, are communicated to the Son, and are essentially and eternally His own. Therefore the Son has this from the Father, that He has part in the Father's spiration of the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit proceeds from (ἐκ) the Father, He proceeds through (διά) the Son, and therefore also from the Son; but without there being involved either a division in the spiration or any infringment upon the Father's unique *principatus*.

By reason of His eternal generation the Son is consubstantial or co-essential with the Father, possessing with Him one indivisible essence or Godhead. He is therefore very God and co-equal with the Father, existing inseparably in the Father and the Father existing in Him. Yet He is not Αὐτόθεος, as is the Father, for all that He hath and is comes from the Father. He is "God of God," Θεὸς ἐκ Θεοῦ, a second Person; and the mode of His personal subsistence makes Him subordinate to the Father, although this subordination involves no inferiority of essence in Him.

The Son is also called in Scripture the Word, λόγος, of God. This title is given because He is the expression of the Father's mind, and to Him properly pertains the economy of external manifestation and mediation. Existing eternally in the bosom of the Father, λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, it is His economy to go forth as the Father's Agent in creation, λόγος προφορικός. He is also called "the Image of the invisible God," "the effulgence of His glory, and the very Image of His substance"; so that, since He has taken our nature and enthroned it as His own, in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.[1]

To Him especially is appropriated the title "Lord," for He is the Heir to whom all authority is given; and also the descriptions of "truth" and "wisdom," because He manifests the mind of God. His proper economy is that of redemption, in connection with which revelation is a characteristic operation. All the works of God, however, are performed *through* Him,[2] and through Him we gain access to the Father in worship and communion.[3]

As Redeemer He was sent into the world to take our nature, and, without ceasing to be very God, to become very Man, in order that He might be a true and effective Mediator between God and man.[4] Being the Son of God it was fitting that He, rather

[1] Col. ii. 9.

[2] Tertullian, *adv. Prax.*, xvi.

[3] St. John xiv. 6.

[4] 1 Tim. ii. 5. See L. Pullan, in Hastings, *Dic. of Christ, s.v.* "Mediator."

than the Father or the Holy Spirit, should become the Son of Man, and enable His adopted brethren through union with Him to become sons of God. This external mission carries with it an internal mission, whereby He becomes "Christ in us, the Hope of glory,"[1] the Source of saving and sanctifying grace, whereby we are enabled to become like unto Him.

By reason of His Incarnation all titles and predicates which pertain to men as men become proper to Him, although there can be no mixture of His Godhead with His Manhood, no transfer of the properties of one nature to the other, and no shortening of His divine nature and attributes. Accordingly, while remaining in His eternal nature what He was, He became the Son of Man, and made human limitations also His own, sin alone being excepted. He has experienced our experiences, resisted our temptations, and has died a human death for our salvation; also rising again, and becoming the Son of Man in glory, our High Priest and ever-living Intercessor.

We have manifold relations to Him, relations distinct from those which we have to the Father and to the Holy Spirit. He is indeed our God; and to Him, with the Father and the Spirit, we owe adoration and obedience. But He is also the Revealer of God, and His teaching demands our full and unqualified acceptance. Since He is our Redeemer and Mediator, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, it is to Him immediately that we must come for light and grace. He is also

[1] Col. i. 27.

our Example, who has translated divine righteousness into the terms of human experience; and our Judge, to whom we have to render account in the last day according to the deeds which we have done in the body. In brief, we are so related to Him that unless we know and accept Him as our Lord and Saviour, through whom alone we can be reconciled to God and approach the Father, we cannot enjoy eternal life.[1]

§ 7. The name of the third Person of the Trinity, "Spirit" (πνεῦμα), etymologically signifies wind or breath.[2] The English "Ghost" has a similar meaning;[3] and the Holy Spirit is revealed to us as proceeding from the Father by spiration or breathing. This description is of course symbolical, and the difference between the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit cannot be exhibited except in symbolical terms. We learn enough from revelation, however, to perceive that the terms generation and spiration could not be interchanged in personal reference without incongruity and error. It is apparent that the relation of the Spirit to the Father is not filial, and that spiration is an untrue description of the Son's procession.

[1] On the doctrine of the Son at large, see St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxxiv, xxxv; III. i–lix; Petavius, *de Trin.* Lib., VI; Bp. Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, arts. ii–vii; J. H. Newman, *Arians;* D. Waterland, *Works;* H. P. Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord;* P. G. Medd, *One Mediator;* M. F. Sadler, *Emmanuel;* Archd. Wilberforce, *The Incarnation;* Norris, *Rudiments of Theol.;* and very many other works.

[2] *Spirare*, to blow or breathe; and πνέω, meaning the same.

[3] Anglo-Saxon, *Gāst.*

The third Person is described as the Spirit of the Son as well as of the Father, and as the gift of both. Moreover, the sign which Christ employed in imparting the Spirit to His apostles, breathing upon them,[1] agrees with the teaching that the relation of the Spirit to the Son is in line with His relation to the Father — one of derivation by spiration. Accordingly we maintain that the Son participates in the Father's eternal spiration of the Holy Spirit. This doctrine agrees with, and is confirmed by, the economic subordination of the Spirit to the Son, who is described as sending the Spirit. Our Lord seems to teach the reason for this subordination when He says of the Spirit, "He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine; therefore said I, that He taketh of Mine," etc.[2] The present tense, "taketh,"[3] which is preferred by the Revisers of 1881, implies that to take of the Son constitutes a law of the Spirit's life. The Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father as *principium* or fountain of Deity; but, by reason of the Son's eternal possession of the Father's essence, in thus proceeding He also taketh from the Son. A recognized summing up of the matter is that the Spirit eternally proceedeth from (ἐκ) the Father through (διά) the Son.

Since He proceeds from both the Father and the

[1] St. John xx. 22.
[2] St. John xvi. 14, 15.
[3] Λαμβάνει. The margin gives λήψεται.

Son, although with the difference above explained, the Holy Spirit is in the order of procession subordinate to both, and is the third Person of the Trinity. Yet He eternally possesses the fulness of the Father's essence, and "with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified," as co-eternal and co-equal with both.

As receiving His essence from the other two Persons, He is often said to be the bond of unity,[1] and the love of the Trinity. To Him is appropriated the abounding goodness of God, and His relation to divine operations in general is that of efficient, quickening, sustaining, and perfecting cause. He is also the gift of God, and it is by His presence that the Father and the Son are made present in our hearts and operate effectually for our good. To blaspheme Him, therefore, is the climax of outrage against God,[2] and utterly to fall away from Him is to sin beyond repentance.[3]

His economy is to sanctify the people of God, and, as ministering to this end, to illuminate. It is by His inspiration that the prophets wrote, and that the Sacred Scriptures, however produced, have become permanent and divinely authoritative vehicles of teaching to those who have learned the Gospel of

[1] This appears first in Athenagoras, *Legat.*, 10, 24. Cf. Victorinus Afer, *de Trin. Hymn.*, 3; St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, vi. 7; vii. 6; xv. 27–37; Hutchings, *Holy Ghost*, pp. 44, 45; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, Vol. I. p. 333.

[2] St. Matt. xii. 31–33; St. Mark iii. 28, 29.

[3] Heb. vi. 4–8.

Jesus Christ in the Church of God; and through Him the Church is guided into all truth. By His operation we are born anew; and He is bestowed upon us by the laying on of hands, in order that He may dwell in us as another Paraclete and impart His gifts — in particular the gifts of wisdom[1] and of spiritual strength,[2] — so that we may be convinced of sin,[3] grow in the love of God,[4] and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.[5] His economy is not a substitute for that of the Son; for He is the Spirit of the Son, and was imparted to the Manhood of Christ without other measure than the essential limitations of receptive capacity of human nature.[6] He is sent by the Son, and it is by His operation that we are made members of Christ and Christ comes to us with saving power.[7]

All these truths are involved and implied in the combination of figures by which the Spirit's presence and operations are symbolized in the Scriptures: (*a*) The wind which invisibly bloweth where it listeth with quickening power;[8] (*b*) The illuminating and purifying fire;[9] (*c*) The regenerating and cleansing

[1] Ephes. i. 17; 1 Cor. xii. 8.

[2] Rom. viii. 26; Ephes. iii. 16.

[3] St. John xvi. 8–11.

[4] Rom. x. 3–5; Ephes. iii. 17–19; Phil. i. 9–11; 1 St. John iv. 12, 13.

[5] Gal. v. 22, 23.

[6] St. John iii. 34.

[7] 1 St. John iii. 24; iv. 13. Cf. St. John xiv. 16–18.

[8] Ezek. xxxvii. 9, 10, 14; St. John iii. 18; Acts ii. 2.

[9] Isa. iv. 4; Acts ii. 3, 4; Revel. iv. 5.

water;[1] (*d*) The gentle and harmless dove;[2] (*e*) The authenticating, assuring, and appropriating seal;[3] (*f*) The consecrating, illumining, healing, and gladdening oil;[4] and others.

It ought not to be difficult for us to perceive that we have peculiar relations and obligations to the Holy Spirit. As a divine Person we ought to worship Him, and to follow His guidance in all things.[5] We are dependent upon Him as the Bestower of life and grace, and only by His inspiration are we enabled to think and do what is right.[6] We may not grieve Him,[7] and, as has been said, to blaspheme Him or to fall away from Him is the climax of wickedness. Those only who are led by the Spirit are proper children of God.[8] Even the treatment of our bodies is to be determined by the fact that they are temples of the Holy Spirit;[9] and apart from His abiding presence in our hearts the redeeming work of Christ is of no avail for us. It is indisputable that such relations and obligations cannot be duly acknowledged unless we distinguish the Spirit from the Father and

[1] St. John iii. 5; Ephes. v. 26; Heb. x. 22.

[2] St. Matt. iii. 16. Cf. x. 16; and Gal. v. 22.

[3] St. John vi. 27; Ephes. i. 13, 14; iv. 20.

[4] Exod. xxix. 7; xxx. 30; Isa. lxi. 1, 3 (with Heb. i. 9); St. Luke x. 34; 1 St. John ii. 20, 27; Revel. iii. 18. Cf. St. Mark vi. 13; St. Jas. v. 14.

[5] Rom. viii. 4–17. Cf. Collect for Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

[6] Cf. Collect for the Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

[7] Ephes. iv. 30.

[8] Rom. viii. 14.

[9] 1 Cor. vi. 19.

the Son, and acknowledge that He is co-essential, co-eternal, and co-equal with both.[1]

III. *Analogies and Illustrations*

§ 8. To treat comprehensively of such a rich subject as the doctrine of the Trinity in one short volume requires much condensation, and we have been compelled almost wholly to dispense with the employment of illustrations. Their use, however, in connection with trinitarian doctrine, has been frequent both in revelation and in theological development. The general subject, therefore, of trinitarian analogies and illustrations — their value and limitations, and the principles to be observed in employing them — ought not entirely to be ignored.

Mysterious truths cannot be made known to human minds without some use of analogies borrowed from common experience, and the terms of divine revelation itself are controlled by this law. If they were not thus determined, they would be unintelligible and meaningless to us. The human mind is incapable of thinking or conceiving in any other terms than such as are afforded by human experience. If, therefore, we are to be taught concerning matters which transcend such experience, this teaching must

[1] On the doctrine of the Holy Spirit at large, see H. B. Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the New Test.*; and *Early Hist. of the Doctrine of the Holy Ghost;* St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, I. xxxvi–xxxviii; Petavius, *de Trin.*, Lib. VII; Bp. Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, art. viii; W. H. Hutchings, *Pers. and Work of the Holy Ghost;* J. Forget, in *Cath. Encyc.*, *s.v.* "Holy Ghost"; Hastings, *Dic. of Bible*, *s.v.* "Holy Spirit".

none the less be given in its terms, for no others are available.

This means that the terms of revelation of the Trinity are necessarily symbolical. It does not follow that they are untrue, or that they are lacking in permanent validity, but that they exhibit truth through the windows of finite experience and knowledge. They afford beginnings of correct apprehension.[1] Divinely inspired terms, of course, can never become false when rightly interpreted, for they are employed by the omniscient Source of truth, who cannot misrepresent. They may, indeed, in subsequent ages, and under different intellectual conditions, have to be translated in order to be understood; but they remain forever true, and if it were possible some day for us to become omniscient, their truth would not cease to be apparent to us. But their truth is missed when they are taken to afford comprehensive knowledge, and when they are torn away from their context and employed as basis of dogmatic inference concerning what is not revealed.

This may be illustrated by astronomical analogies. The phenomena which the heavens afford to our unaided eyes do not become false, although their significance is wondrously enlarged, when we investigate the same heavens with the aid of modern

[1] On the incipient nature of our knowledge of divine mysteries and the symbolical nature of theological terms, see *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. v. § 16 (*a*); *Being and Attributes of God*, ch. ii. §§ 6, 12 (*c*); ch. x. § 4.

instruments. Nor is the impression gained by the naked eye misleading, unless we assume that the knowledge which it conveys is more complete than is really and obviously the case, and make rash inferences therefrom. To speak of sunrise and sunset does not cease to be correct, although we no longer infer from these phenomena that the sun revolves around the earth. To put this in another way, the terms of nature's revelation to the ancients — the terms of sunrise and sunset — will continue to be valid and intelligible so long as the solar system remains; but the fuller knowledge of modern days shows how very inadequate these terms are, and how misleading they become when regarded as a sufficient basis of speculative astronomy.[1]

So it is with the revelation of the Trinity. That mystery has been exhibited to us in terms or analogies of threefold personality, generation, spiration, etc.;[2] and our only experience of these things exhibits them to us as finite, and as subject to conditions which cannot reasonably be regarded as inhering in the Divine Being. We acknowledge, therefore, that they are analogies and only symbolically true as applied

[1] A blind person who asked what scarlet was like was told that it was like the sound of a trumpet. The answer was true, and perhaps was as adequate as could be given to a blind person, for the sound of a trumpet is to other sounds what scarlet is to other colours. Moreover, the symbolical truth of the description would not be destroyed for the blind person, if his acquisition of eyesight brought his dependence upon it to an end.

[2] That is, in terms of experience, which these words correctly summarize and define.

to God. Yet we perceive that they are true symbols, not only because God has chosen them — a sufficient reason for our acceptance of them, — but because the necessities of thought concerning personality agree with and support them. Therefore, however much the divine reality transcends any conception which we can form of personality, generation, and spiration, we rest assured that in accepting such terms lies the beginning of a knowledge of God which will never be stultified or reduced to unreality by any knowledge that may be in store for us in the life to come. More than this, our knowledge of God, partial though it be, is sufficient to enable us to avoid reading too much into the terms of revelation, and to keep from committing ourselves to unwarrantable inferences from them.

Christian history supports this contention. The doctrine of three divine Persons in God has never become either tritheistic or Sabellian among those who have faithfully received the Church's teaching; and the Church has never permitted her doctrines of divine generation and spiration to be determined in their meaning and implications by physical and temporal connotations.

§ 9. The most orthodox theologians, however, have felt free to make use of extra-scriptural illustrations, borrowed from human experience at large, for the purpose of supplementing the analogies employed in revelation. Our grouping of them is not strictly logical, but we find it practically convenient

to mention the more important of them under four heads.[1]

(*a*) The first class of illustrations has to do with the counter truths of the divine processions and the indivisible unity of the Godhead. In the *Epistle to the Hebrews* the Son is said to be the "effulgence," ἀπαύγασμα, of the Father's glory,[2] and somewhat in line with this, certain ancient fathers described the Son's procession as resembling that of brightness from light, or light from light.[3] Tertullian likened the three Persons to the sun, its ray and the apex of the ray,[4] and St. Gregory Naz. mentions, with adverse criticism, the analogy of the sun, its ray and its light.[5] Tertullian also used the illustrations of root, tree, and fruit, in one plant; and of fountain, river, and stream, in one water.[6] Closely related to these are St. Augustine's illustrations of the spring, the river, and the cup of the same substantial water; and the root, the trunk, and the branch of the same

[1] On trinitarian analogies and illustrations, see Thomassinus, *Theol. Dogm.*, Tr. II. ch. xxvi; Suicer, *Thesaurus*, *s. v.* τρίας, Col. 1297; R. Owen, *Dog. Theol.*, ch. v. § 9; Illingworth, *Personality*, pp. 69–75 (cf. note 27, pp. 272–274); R. C. Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, pp. 170–176; Hagenbach, *Hist. of Christ. Doc.*, § 42; J. H. Newman, *Select Treatises*, Vol. II. pp. 173–177.

[2] Heb. i. 3.

[3] Justin M., *Dial.*, 56; Origen, *de Princip.*, I. ii. 7; St. Dionysius Alex., *Ep. ad. Dion.*, 3, 4; St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, II. xviii. 33; III. xxvii. 36. Tatian, *To the Greeks*, uses the figure of a torch from fire.

[4] *Apol.*, 21; *adv. Prax.*, viii.

[5] *Theol. Orat.*, v. 31–33.

[6] *Adv. Prax.*, viii.

wood.[1] St. Dionysius of Alexandria called the Son the breath of God's power;[2] and Victorinus Afer described Him as the utterance of the divine will. Another description of the three Persons is that of the invisible self, its visible expression in action, and the responding effect. To illustrate the non-necessity that the procession of the Spirit should be a second begetting, the divine Persons are likened to Adam, Eve, and Seth. Whereas Seth was begotten of Adam, Eve was not, although she proceeded from his side.[3] Bearing in mind the fact that the family constitutes the social unit, apart from which human persons cannot come into being, some likened the Trinity to father, mother, and child. This comparison was regarded as suspicious, however, as importing a feminine element into the Godhead, and as inconsistent with the eternal order of the divine Persons.[4] It is clear that none of the illustrations of this group can be pressed in their connotations of physical composition and motion and of temporal sequence.

(*b*) The second class of illustrations is largely psychological, being based upon the fact that man is created in the image of God, and being suggested by analysis of human nature. These illustrations bear on the problem of reconciling unity of essence with tri-personal subsistence. They do not, directly at

[1] In *de Fid. et Symb.*, 17.

[2] *Ep. ad Dion.*, 3, 4.

[3] St. Gregory Naz., *Theol. Orat.*, v. 11.

[4] St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, xii. 5–8. The same objection was made against the comparison with Adam, Eve, and Seth.

least, bear on the mystery of divine processions. Some have made use of the union of body, soul, and spirit in human nature, but this analogy has ordinarily been set aside as having elements which are obviously misleading in such a comparison.[1] Psychology divides the activities of the soul into the three branches of emotion, reason, and will; and this analogy is a more favorite one because wholly spiritual and personal. Yet there is but one person in the human soul, and in this particular the illustration fails and may mislead. The same may be said of the trinity of intellectual, moral, and spiritual functions; and of the various subtle trinities which St. Augustine skilfully and beautifully brings to light and employs:[2]—memory, understanding, and will;[3] mind, word, and love thereof; idea, contemplation of it, and love of it; object, seeing it, and attending to it, or image, memory, and attention. A modern line of thought was anticipated by Victorinus Afer when he likened the Son to the object of the Father's self-knowledge; and J. R. Illingworth calls attention to the presence of subject, object, and relation between the two in personality. "A person . . . is a subject who can become an object to himself, and the relation of these two terms is necessarily a third term."[4] Such an

[1] It is vigorously objected to by J. B. Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, ch. viii.

[2] In *de Trinitate*, esp. Lib. IX–XIV.

[3] See note in *Nicene and Post-Nic. Fathers*, St. Augustine's *de Trin.*, p. 143.

[4] *Personality*, pp. 69, 70.

illustration cannot be pressed far without Sabellian implication, for the terms mentioned are in reality aspects in the functioning of single personalities. A trinity of real persons in one being, so far from being suggested, is made to appear more remote from the verisimilitude of truth.

(*c*) A third group includes illustrations derived from external objects and relations: — such as the three colours of the rainbow;[1] the three dimensions of space; the past, present, and future relations of time; three torches in a room serving as *foci* of one light;[2] the widely prevalent threefold grouping of leaves in the vegetable kingdom; the three forms of carbon — diamond, graphite, and coal.

(*d*) Finally we come to the representations of the Trinity in art, the illustrative value of which is plainly quite limited. The most commonplace are the triangle, of which we shall have something to say, and the trefoil, a conventionalized natural symbol. In the pictorial art of the Church, the Trinity is usually represented by a hand extended from a cloud, a figure of Christ as Man, and a dove. Such representations are not intended to illustrate the mystery of tri-unity. They merely raise our thoughts to the divine Persons.[3]

[1] St. Basil, *Epis.*, xxxviii. 4, 5.

[2] Pseudo-Dion. Areopagite, *Divine Names*, ch. ii.

[3] Smith and Cheetham, *Dic. of Christ. Antiq.*, *s.vv.* "God the Father, Representations of"; "Jesus Christ, Representations of"; and "Trinity, the Holy (in Art)"; J. R. Beard, *Historical and Artistic Illust. of the Trinity.*

§ 10. The various illustrations which we have mentioned can be seen to have very unequal value. Some of them are obviously inappropriate, and no one of them is either adequate or capable of being pressed very far without implying error.[1] In so far as they are of purely human device they cannot, even within the limits of their safe employment, possess the authority and finality in determining doctrine which belong to the terms of revelation. It has been acknowledged that even these terms are analogical and inadequate, and that they may not be pressed in their finite connotations; but, unlike all other terms, they have divine sanction. This assures us that, when rightly taken, they are true and permanently valid. They, and they alone, determine catholic doctrine. Yet the resort to extra-scriptural illustrations, in order to facilitate the task of combining the opposite truths of revealed doctrine in one apprehension and act of faith, is inevitable; and, if their limitations are properly allowed for, these illustrations are neither misleading nor to be condemned.

That they have some value seems likely when we remember that the realities of human experience are the handiwork of God; and, although finite, cannot fail to exhibit some reflection of the nature of their Maker. Moreover, we are assured that man is created in the image of God;[2] and, however inadequate an

[1] Bp. Ellicott, *Foundations of Sacred Study*, 1st Series, pp. 123, 124.
[2] Gen. i. 26, 27.

image of the Infinite he may be, we are warranted in looking for partial and fragmentary analogies between the divine and the human natures. But humanly produced analogies can never afford a basis of definition of divine mysteries. Their proper use and value lies wholly in their confirmatory suggestiveness. At best they simply help us to receive the terms of revelation without being disturbed by the antitheses of thought and insoluble problems which these terms obtrude upon the attention of critical minds. The problems defy our efforts to solve them, but when we perceive that partially analogous antitheses and insoluble problems are exhibited in common experience, we become less inclined to regard the seeming oppositions of trinitarian doctrine as affording warrant for its rejection. Furthermore, the human mind is so constituted that imagination plays an important and necessary part in assisting the reason to apprehend and assimilate even the most abstract truths — truths which are not in their own nature capable of being actually represented by the imagination.

But, although we inevitably make use of concrete figures as windows, so to speak, through which to contemplate super-physical realities and mysteries, and although these figures have a suggestive value which may not be denied, yet safety in thinking of the ineffable Trinity requires us to remember their inadequacy, and their misleading nature when pressed too far and given a definitive or proving function.

They are in any case finite, and cannot do more than suggest the mysteries of infinite Deity. Their physical and temporal connotations should be disregarded as utterly foreign to a correct description of the non-spatial and eternal essence of God. Catholic writers have not been apt to forget these considerations, and the ancient fathers often cautioned their readers against taking their illustrations literally or with forgetfulness of the difference between the Creator and His creatures.[1]

The combination of suggestive value and essential inadequacy which is discoverable in the best illustrations of the Trinity can be seen in the common representation of the triune God by a triangle. A triangle is an externally limited and spatial figure, whereas God transcends spatial relations and has neither figure nor external limitation. Again, the triangle is a thing of mutually excluding parts; but God, although He fills the universe, has neither parts nor measures, and the whole Trinity exists in each divine Person. Finally, a triangle is a lifeless diagram, and its internal relations are purely geometrical and non-personal; whereas God is essentially life, and is wholly and absolutely personal. So true is this that in Him alone are the requirements of complete personality satisfied, without impersonal mixtures.

Yet a triangle does combine coherent unity and distinct threefoldness without confusion, and both are

[1] *E.g.* St. Gregory Naz., *Theol. Orat.*, v. 31–33; St. Augustine, *de Trin.*, xv. 42, 43.

essential to the notion of a triangle. Each of its three angles exhibits a point, mathematically speaking, without dimensions; and each is what it is in the triangle by reason of the mutual relations which the sides represent. These peculiarities are certainly suggestive, and it is because of them that a triangle is so frequently used to illustrate the unity of three distinct Persons in the Godhead, each indivisible and immeasurable. Moreover, the obviousness of the points of contrast between this mystery and the figure employed to represent it removes all danger of regarding the illustration as adequate, and of pressing it beyond the very limited range of its applicability.

And this exemplifies what appears to be a law in relation to all uninspired illustrations of the Trinity. The law is that the need of caution in employing these illustrations is proportionate in degree of urgency to their seeming value as illustrations; and the more evident are the incidental points of contrast between the illustration and the mystery to which it is applied, the less likely is the mind to be misled. In other words, the suggestive value and the safety of trinitarian illustrations, when used by untrained and irresponsible thinkers, vary in inverse proportion. The most purely physical illustrations appear least adequate; and just for that reason they are the safest, since they are least likely to be pressed beyond truth and reason. On the other hand, the most satisfying illustrations — for example, those in which

super-physical and personal qualities and relations are employed — are the ones in which the evidences of inadequacy are least conspicuous, and therefore most apt to be at least partially disregarded. It would seem, therefore, that psychological analogies — such as were employed by St. Augustine, and such as are congenial to certain modern writers — require the most careful handling. If unduly emphasized, they may suggest the Sabellian error, rather than the coinherence of three real Persons in the one Godhead.[1]

A multiplication of illustrations, especially if they are derived from diverse sources, will go far to safeguard their use. It will lessen the danger of emphasizing unduly, or depending too much upon, any one of them. And the possible misapplications of each will be corrected by comparison with other and diverse analogies.

[1] On the limitations of the analogy of human father and son, employed by St. Athanasius and Cappadocian writers to illustrate the consubstantiality of the eternal Son with the Father, see pp. 180 (note 1), 267, 268, above.

CHAPTER IX

PRACTICAL VALUE

I. *Practical Aim of Revelation*

§ 1. Having completed our treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity in its historical, scriptural, and technical aspects, it remains to show that this doctrine is supremely practical: — that it is neither a mere triumph of speculative construction, having academic interest only, nor simply a challenge to the reason, imposed in order to put us to a probation of intellectual surrender. We may be sure that no doctrine is likely either to be regarded as necessary to be believed or really to be intelligible which has no evident relation to a better understanding of human life and destiny, and no bearing on human conduct.[1]

That the universe of truth is at unity with itself may be reckoned as a necessary assumption of intelligent minds. All truths must therefore be regarded as having mutual connection; and it is by learning as much of truth as is knowable that men acquire

[1] On the practical value of the doctrine of the Trinity, see Illingworth, *Trinity*, chh. vii–ix; Wilhelm and Scannell, *Cath. Theol.*, § 110; Bp. Pearson, *Apos. Creed*, various passages on the need of belief, art. ii, pp. 180–186, 253–257, 276–279; art. viii, pp. 585–589; D. Waterland, *Importance of the Doc. of the Trinity*, esp. ch. ii; Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 494–504.

such understanding as they are capable of gaining of the meaning of life and of the principles by which human life ought to be guided. No truth or aspect of truth stands entirely by itself; and, although we rightly distinguish between the abstract and practical aspects of truth, these aspects are invariably related and mutually determinative, if both are true. When they appear to be mutually disconnected, the credibility of at least one or other of them is destroyed; and, since the practical is most obvious and urgent in its claims upon our acceptance, this means that abstract and theoretical propositions fail to secure belief when they cannot be related to any thing practical. Relatedness is a fundamental condition of credibility and of intelligibility. The unrelated is necessarily dismissed from serious consideration by thoughtful man as irrational and unimportant.[1]

The doctrine of the Trinity has often been fiercely assailed, and every resource of logic, rhetoric, and external influence has again and again been enlisted for its overthrow; but it has held its own for many centuries, and continues to determine the convictions of the most enlightened portion of the human race. This fact indicates that the doctrine in question has shown itself to be highly credible.[2] But it shows

[1] See Hakluyt Egerton, *Liberal Theology*, pp. 82–93; the writer's *Introd. to Dog. Theol.*, ch. ii. § 5; *Evolution and the Fall*, Lec. v. Pt. II.

[2] Cf. Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*, pp. 190–194. He says of this doctrine, "It supports and is supported by the whole weight of a fact in history, with which nothing else in the wide world can even

more than this. In view of the law above set forth, that propositions depend for credibility upon their relatednesss to what is practical, it affords evidence that the doctrine of the Trinity has been found or thought to be related to life and to have practical value.

§ 2. An intelligent Christian believer is not likely to acquiesce in the notion that the God whom he has learned to regard as the sum and source of wisdom and love has manifested Himself to His creatures in terms which simply obtrude upon our attention an intellectual problem, and which afford us no guidance in drawing near to Him and in fulfilling the end for which He made us.[1] To believe in the love and wisdom of God carries with it a conviction that any genuine self-revelation of God will be found to be designed for our welfare, and to afford knowledge which will throw light over the pathway of life and enable us more securely to advance towards our heavenly goal and enjoy God forever. So irresistible for spiritual minds is this logic that, when men are seen to miss the practical value of revealed doctrine, the inference is inevitable that they either have not entered into a true knowledge of God or

for a moment be compared. That fact is the age-long empire of Jesus Christ over the hearts of men."

[1] J. R. Illingworth, in *op. cit.*, pp. 180–187, shows the practical origin of trinitarian teaching. The purpose of the Incarnation was to reveal God as love, and this was most effectively done by exhibiting the plurality of Persons in the Godhead, between whom love is eternally exercised.

do not realize the supreme and practical importance of spiritual ideals and aims. In the latter case they fail to perceive the value of trinitarian doctrine because their minds are unspiritual, and spiritual things are spiritually examined.[1] We do not mean to assert that non-trinitarians generally are unspiritual. We prefer to believe that many who profess Christianity without accepting trinitarian doctrine have never really understood its content and meaning, and for this reason have failed to perceive its practical value. They reject it under the influence of intellectual misapprehension.

The conclusion to which our argument leads is that to prove that the doctrine of the Trinity has been divinely revealed is also to establish its practical value.[2] A revelation which is really divine is necessarily possessed of practical bearing and value, and this practical value helps to make its divine source credible. We do not mean to imply that the practical value of given particulars of revelation is necessarily and immediately apparent to those who receive them. The truths of God are, of course, full of mystery; and it often requires careful scrutiny to discern their bearing on life. Moreover, this practical bearing cannot be fully realized until after some experience in the consequences of belief has been had. But to maintain that a revealed doctrine has no bearing on life — no practical value — is to throw discredit

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 14.

[2] On this point, see D. Waterland, *op. cit.*, ch. iii.

upon the love and wisdom of the divine Revealer. It is, in effect, to encourage irreverent thoughts of God.

We conclude, therefore, that, having abundant reasons to believe, as has been shown in previous chapters of this volume, that the doctrine of the Trinity has been divinely revealed, we are constrained to regard this doctrine as having practical value, and as capable of enlightening our minds in pursuing the way of everlasting life. This conclusion we hold to be inevitable whether we can adequately understand and exhibit the practical bearings of our doctrine in detail or not. If, however, we succeed in establishing the value of the doctrine as a whole, we shall also have justified the inference that its particulars are important; for the doctrine of the Trinity is a coherent mystery, which cannot be taken to pieces without subverting and nullifying it.

§ 3. The objection may be urged at this point that what has been said applies only to the original and biblical form of the doctrine, and not to the metaphysical propositions of ecclesiastical dogma. This objection has already been discussed in another connection,[1] and we need not repeat all that has been said in that place. The substance of our reply is that ecclesiastical dogma has no other content than that of biblical doctrine. Its sole purport is to define biblical teaching in terms calculated to shut out erroneous and subversive interpretations thereof.

[1] In ch. i. § 3, above.

Some of these terms were certainly borrowed from philosophical sources. But the Church did not take over the metaphysical systems of thought with which they had previously been associated. On the contrary, she employed them in new connections, connections which gave them meanings that fitted them for the purpose of correctly defining the teaching of Scripture and traditional beliefs of Christians, inherited from apostolic days. Inasmuch, therefore, as the doctrine of the Creeds and Councils of the Church is no other than the teaching of Scripture, to establish the practical value of the one is to prove that of the other.

Speaking in the abstract, it is undoubtedly sufficient for personal salvation if one accepts the doctrine of the Trinity in exclusively biblical terms, provided subversive interpretations are avoided. It is the truth itself that emancipates us and guides our footsteps, rather than any particular terms of its embodiment. But truth cannot be made known or preserved without the use of suitable terms, and the terms which were employed in revelation, suitable as they were for that purpose, were not necessarily capable by themselves of preserving an accurate knowledge of revealed truth among the people of later ages. Succeeding generations have brought many confusing changes in the forms of thought and language which govern men's conceptions, and much scholarship is required to put ourselves into the mental atmosphere to which the terms of revelation were adapted. Moreover, revelation was given to a great extent in

terms of unique experience, rather than in definitions, and such terms are peculiarly liable to be misinterpreted by those whose experience is determined by changed mental conditions. If the teaching of experiences so unique as were those of the pentecostal age was accurately to be preserved for future generations, it had sooner or later to be embodied, at least in its determinative particulars, in definitions the terms of which could be employed in sufficiently crystallized meanings to be susceptible of being correctly interpreted in subsequent ages.

The need of dogmatic definitions was therefore certain to be felt when the experiences of primitive believers began to seem remote. Changed conditions had their inevitable effect, and the scriptural records of revelation, useful and necessary as they continued to be for verification of inherited truths, needed interpretation; and this demanded a correct knowledge of the primary elements of revealed doctrine on the part of those who undertook to interpret them. In the meantime, many erroneous interpretations were exploited, and the task of assimilating biblical doctrine without resort to extra-biblical guidance became practically too difficult for ordinary readers of Scripture.

The Creeds define the determinative particulars of this teaching, and define them sufficiently for ordinary guidance; and the technical terms of catholic theology, which are selected for the use of those who are competent to make a scientific study of revealed

truth, have no other purpose than to co-ordinate the contents of revelation for more intelligent consideration, and to equip those who are called to be teachers. A successful teacher is necessarily one who possesses a thorough and more or less technical mastery of his subject.

§ 4. The rejoinder may be made that the revelations recorded in Scripture are not doctrines about the divine Persons, but self-manifestations by means of which God in Christ has established the living relations between us and Himself wherein true religion essentially consists. It may be urged, therefore, that to bring in dogma is vitally to change the nature of Christianity. Assuming that there are three divine Persons, the fact remains that biblical Christianity consists in living relations with Them, in trustful dependence upon Them. Propositions about Them are irrelevant; and, when imposed as conditions of salvation, they necessarily obscure the real meaning of the Gospel, and sap the life of religion.

We of course agree with the contention that the essence of true religion consists of living relations with God, and that propositions concerning the divine Persons have religious value and justification only on the assumption that they are needed for the preservation of these relations, and for our assurance of their reality and necessity. To take a different ground would be to adopt a hopelessly unscriptural position. But our reply to the objection which we are considering lies in the truth of the assumption just mentioned

— an assumption which is abundantly justified by the teaching of the New Testament Scriptures. These Scriptures everywhere imply that what we *think* of Christ must determine our *personal attitude* towards Him; and therefore they contain definite propositions concerning Him, and concerning the Father and the Holy Spirit as well. Ecclesiastical dogmas merely translate these propositions into terms which the Church's experience with error has shown to be required for their protection from destructive misinterpretation. To raise objections against them, on the plea which we are discussing, is in effect to find fault with the teachings of Scripture which they define, and to accuse the sacred writers themselves of subverting the Gospel.

We are not justified in rendering allegiance to the divine Persons without such knowledge of Them as will afford a sufficient reason for so doing. The doctrine of the Trinity affords this knowledge. It supplies the only possible justification of the relations to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, a practical observance of which constitutes Christianity. No doubt this doctrine was practically applied rather than defined by ordinary believers in the first age of Christian history. But the progress of error has long since made definition necessary, if the worship and other religious practices of Christians are to be justified and continued; and it is quite impossible to restore primitive conditions in this regard. Intelligent people at least can no longer feel justified

in worshipping the Trinity, without coming to conclusions concerning the questions to which the Creeds and other definitions of the universal Church give the only true answers. The practical value of these definitions, therefore, is indisputable, and lies in the fact that they are needed vehicles and preservatives of truths which determine and justify our attitude towards the Persons whose self-revelation is recorded in Holy Scripture.

§ 5. If, as has been maintained, the general contents of divine revelation are determined by divine love and wisdom, and therefore by our practical needs, we may be sure that no part of revealed doctrine is practically superfluous. God never wastes His teaching; and every particular in His self-manifestation must have its own value and relation to the general and practical purpose for which He reveals Himself to us. It must have this, whether we are able to understand its relation to the whole or not.

It is with no intention of disparaging the value of other contents of revelation that we insist upon the especially critical importance of the more central and fundamental particulars of revealed doctrine.[1] And we have clear warrant for insisting upon the supreme importance and value of the doctrine of the Trinity. All the Scriptures are either directly or indirectly concerned with this doctrine. They con-

[1] On the fallacy of distinguishing between essential and non-essential contents of divine revelation, see *Authority, Eccles. and Biblical*, ch. viii. § 6.

stitute a record of the successive stages of its revelation; and the mystery of the Trinity affords the chief clue to the significance of sacred history, and to the divine meaning of the Old as well as of the New Testament.[1] The Scriptures exhibit their fundamental and connected meaning only when they are interpreted as describing the manifold ways in which, and the conditions under which, God from the beginning trained His chosen people for the reception of His fuller self-manifestation, and, after much breaking of ground, clearly revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — three distinct Persons subsisting in one indivisible Godhead. All other particulars of revelation recorded in Scripture are related to, and determined in meaning by, this central mystery. The dispensations of creation, redemption, and sanctification are revealed as economies of the several divine Persons; and the relations and obligations in which, and under which, we stand towards God are determined in form and meaning, according to Scripture, by their connection with the mystery of The Three in One.

II. *For Other Christian Beliefs*

§ 6. The conclusion to which we are driven by what has been said in the previous section is that, if Christian doctrine in general has practical value — Christian believers at least cannot consistently deny this, — the doctrine of the Trinity is supremely vital

[1] The evidence of this has been given in chh. ii, iv, above.

and important for the guidance of those who would rightly serve God and enter into everlasting life with Him. Our conclusion will be fortified, however, if we consider a few leading examples of the dependence of other Christian beliefs upon an acceptance of this mystery.

That belief in a living and personal God — a God who has not only made us, but who treats us as His children, providing for our welfare, and regarding the prayers of those who call upon Him, who indeed judges us according to our deserving, although with the merciful judgment of a Father — that such a belief has immense value in giving vital reality to moral ideals, in fortifying us in our struggles for righteousness, in encouraging the hope of immortality and of ultimate self-realization, and in making life appear to be worth living, is not to be denied by those who value such results and have not suppressed their religious instincts.

Man is indeed by nature a religious being. Without religion he cannot satisfy His deepest instincts or realize himself; and religion is essentially a living relation by which we are bound to God — one which, among other essential elements, requires conscious belief in God as a living and personal Being, with whom we can enjoy some kind of personal communion and fellowship.[1] Theistic agnosticism is necessarily fatal to a genuine religious consciousness; and pantheism mocks religious aspirations with a

[1] See H. P. Liddon, *Some Elements of Religion*, Lec. i.

philosophy of being from which the personal element — the very life of religion — is expressly excluded. Polytheism is utterly discredited among the intelligent; and the deification of humanity which positivism suggests can never lift mankind above its existing level. Nothing but belief in one supreme and personal God and Father of us all can satisfy the requirements of human nature and give vital power to the moral ideals upon which the progress of our race depends.

It is clear, therefore, that a doctrine which gives living reality and validity to belief in a personal God, and which removes the chief intellectual difficulty that hinders philosophical thinkers from believing in the conceivability and possibility of infinite personality, has immense practical value — greater value than any other conceivable doctrine. Such doctrine establishes religion on secure foundations, and gives validity to the only credible philosophy of a life worth living. Now the doctrine of the Trinity, when thoughtfully considered, can be seen to do all this, and therefore to be the most enlightening and helpful of all doctrines.

The argument by which its value for belief in a personal God is established has already been indicated.[1] But it seems desirable to remind the reader that the conception of an isolated person has been discarded by the best modern intelligence as involving self-contradiction. The existence and functioning

[1] In ch. vi. § 11. Cf. ch. vii. § 2.

of a divine Person, therefore, seems to require that such Person should possess an *alter-ego*; and unitarian thought has never been able to discover an adequate *alter-ego* for an infinite Person in the finite universe. In fact the tendency of unitarian thought is pantheistic — a tendency which is not successfully disguised by such a term as "supra-personal." If to call God supra-personal means that He is supremely personal — personal in a more perfect sense than man can be reckoned to be — such a conclusion is to be insisted upon as a vital truth. But it usually means that God is impersonal — a notion which is inconsistent with the superhuman nature of God, and which nullifies that in God that makes Him the object of personal service and adoring love.[1] The only adequate *alter ego* of an infinite Person is a second infinite Person; and the impossibility that there should be more than one infinite and supreme Being requires that this distinction between *ego* and *alter-ego* should have its basis and actuality within the indivisible essence of God. If the personality of God depends upon anything external to His own Being, He is externally limited in essence and finite — that is, not God.

Belief in plural personality within the Godhead appears, therefore, under the conditions of modern thought,[2] to be required for intelligent belief in a

[1] Cf. Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*, pp. 188, 189.

[2] We are giving an argument the validity of which depends upon the validity of modern thought concerning the necessities of per-

God who is at once supreme and personal.[1] But there is no other doctrine of plural personality in God which is seriously to be reckoned with except the doctrine of the Trinity. Belief in a duality of divine Persons is acknowledged to be peculiarly hard to reconcile with belief in divine unity; and the Christian belief in a third divine Person has shown itself to be capable of removing this difficulty. Monotheism has been most consistently and effectually maintained among trinitarians; and the history both of higher thinking and of popular belief proves that, so far from weakening the doctrine of divine unity, trinitarian doctrine fortifies belief in one supreme and personal God against all assaults and all difficulties. Its vital importance is therefore indisputable.

§ 7. The doctrine of the Trinity is necessary in order to justify belief in Christ. Such belief, including an acceptance of Christ's personal claim, constitutes the very heart and inspiration of Christian faith in general. If Christ is not what He claimed to be, the

sonal functioning. We do not venture, however, to dogmatize as to the possibilities or non-possibilities of divine personality. Yet seeming necessities may rightly be employed, when relevant, for the confirmation of revealed doctrine.

[1] A God who is supreme and yet not far from His children must be both transcendent and immanent. Deism exclusively considered, and therefore caricatured, the divine transcendence; and pantheism in a similar manner caricatures the immanence of God. The Incarnation, and the trinitarian doctrine which that mystery presupposes, combine both truths and avoid caricaturing either. Illingworth, *Trinity*, pp. 193–203; Liddon, *Divinity of our Lord*, pp. 452–459; Sparrow-Simpson, *Christ. Doc. of God*, Lec. iv.

whole Christian system has a false basis; and the overthrow of Christianity involves a nullification of the forces and inspirations which have emancipated countless millions from superstition, and have made modern civilization a possibility. "What think ye of Christ?" is a question the answer to which determines either a continuance of human progress or a lasting nightmare of irreligion, moral failure, and human ruin.[1] Christ in us is the sole "hope of glory";[2] and upon belief in Him depends our assurance of access to God our Father, the living source of all that sustains us under the burdens and trials of our earthly pilgrimage.

The dilemma, Christ is either God or not good, has never been successfully evaded; for it is incredible that a mere man should be inspired by sane and righteous motives in claiming to be one with God, in exacting forms of personal allegiance which pertain exclusively to the Supreme Being, and in accepting the worship which men cannot lawfully render except to their Creator. Christ indeed exhibits the character of ideal Man, but His virtues cannot be separated from His claim to be divine without reducing the Gospel narratives to incoherent fragments. As they stand, these narratives exhibit a sobriety and a self-consistency which justify our acceptance

[1] Guy Thorne's novel, *When It Was Dark*, fiction though it be, gives a credible portrayal of the moral and social results that would ensue, if the traditional belief in Christ's Person were proved to be false.

[2] Col. i. 27.

of their substantial truth, and the portrait of Christ which they give is too unique in its spiritual quality to have been invented. At all events, it is the belief that Christ is very God as well as very Man, and that in His Person we discover God taking our nature upon Himself in order to save us from sin and impart to us eternal life, it is this belief which has justified Christian hopes, and which is therefore practically vital.

But the whole scheme of Christian doctrine, as well as the explicit teaching of Christ, requires us to distinguish the Person of Christ our Redeemer from the Person of the Father who sent Him into the world. That the Father is God, all confess; that Christ is God, is the basis of Christian hopes; and no tenable theory can justify a recognition of distinct Persons as equally to be identified with the Supreme Being except the doctrine of the Trinity.[1] A doctrine which is thus essential to the validity of Christian hopes is indisputably of priceless value. It is indispensable for Christian security and for guidance in the way of life.

§ 8. The evangelical doctrine that we are saved from sin only through the death of Christ and His victory over death in our behalf — a doctrine which cannot be repudiated, if historical Christianity is to be accepted, — is a truth of obvious practical importance; and, when seriously examined, can be seen to be the most complex of Christian mysteries. Its

[1] See Illingworth, *Trinity*, pp. 147–149.

truth, like that of our Lord's divine claim, is essential to the validity of Christian hopes.[1] But, thanks to one-sided caricatures, it has suffered much disparagement in modern literature. The chief modern difficulties in this connection grow out of the two errors of making the victim of Calvary a pure scapegoat, an absolute substitute for us in the mystery of making satisfaction for sin; and of setting a loving Saviour over against a vengeful Father.

The doctrine of the Trinity bears pointedly on the mystery of the Cross; and, when duly allowed for, relieves it of both of these misconceptions and difficulties. That doctrine involves the truth that the Victim of the Cross was divine as well as human, being no other than the second Person of the Trinity. If so, two things follow: In the first place God took upon *Himself*, after assuming our nature, the consequence of our guilt. It is a wretched caricature to say that God selected out a just man from his guilty fellows, and punished him while letting the rest go free. In a sense, indeed, Christ did suffer alone — *i.e.*, initially and redemptively speaking. But, as God, He had power to gather us into union with Himself in His body, and to make us real and sacramental participators in His death. He suffered apart only that He might become in us the Sanctifier of our

[1] The rest of this chapter to some extent reproduces part of a paper read by the author before the Chicago Clericus, and published in pamphlet form in 1905: *The Practical Value of the Doctrine of the Trinity.*

sufferings, and our Head and Representative in suffering before the Father.

Again, if Christ is the second Person of the Trinity, there can be no difference of attitude toward sin on His part and on the part of the Father. They are not only inseparable in essence, but in purpose and operation as well. It was the love of the Father as well as of the Son that caused our Lord's endurance of death in our behalf; and it was His own fury against sin, as well as the outraged justice of a holy Father, that made such suffering the only possible means of remission of sin.

If the doctrine of the Trinity thus clears so practical a mystery as that of the Cross from difficulties which have been unwarrantably added to it, then that doctrine is of priceless practical value, as priceless as is the value of our hope in our Redeemer.[1]

III. *For Guidance of Life*

§ 9. A doctrine which is perceived to constitute a necessary basis and justification of intelligent belief in a personal and living God, of acceptance of Christ as our Example and Lord, and of belief in the propitiatory and saving value of the death of Christ, cannot be seriously regarded as a mere intellectual puzzle, or as other than the true and practical working philosophy of life. But the importance of realizing

[1] See Illingworth, *Trinity*, pp. 155–159; D. Waterland, *op. cit.*, pp. 425–434; St. Athanasius, *c. Arian.*, II. xxi. 69, 70; W. Bright, *St. Leo on the Incarn.*, note 6.

the practical value of this doctrine is so great, and the absence of such realization is so wide-spread, that we shall go on and indicate some of the more direct bearings of trinitarian teaching on human conduct.

If there is a trinity of Persons in God, and if these Persons have come into the economic relations towards us which we have elsewhere described,[1] then we have distinct relations and duties to each of Them as well as to the whole Trinity. These relations and duties constitute the determinative content of practical Christianity, which has no conceivable basis if trinitarian doctrine is false.[2] In the order of nature we come into relations with the Father, to whom we owe countless blessings. These blessings afford reasons and opportunities for creaturely and grateful service which an enlightened conscience may neither ignore nor fail to distinguish from the blessings which the dispensations of Christ and of the Holy Spirit secure for us. To live according to nature, rightly understood, is a condition of obedience to the Father's will.

Again, the doctrine we are considering brings us into relation to a mediatorial Redeemer, to be truly recognized only when we distinguish Him from the Father. These relations also involve privileges and duties which must be enjoyed and performed if the will of God is to be supreme in us, and if we are to share in the higher sonship of God which comes

[1] In ch. vii. §§ 1, 2, 5–7.

[2] D. Waterland, *op. cit.*, pp. 416–421; and *Lady Moyer Sermons*, p. 172.

through our union with Christ in His body, the Church. All the duties of the Christian covenant derive their nature and obligation from the truth that Christ is the second Person of the ever blessed Trinity.

Once more, the economy of the Holy Spirit of grace and sanctification involves peculiar relations to the third Person of the Trinity. We must make our bodies fit temples for His abode. We must value and use the instruments of sanctification, which are made what they are by His operation. We must lend our inner minds to His guidance and must pray with His help, if we would have our prayers penetrate to the Divine Majesty.

Finally, the truth that these Three are one Supreme Being, although truly distinct Persons, serves to combine all our several relations and duties to the divine Persons in one coherent ideal of life. The moral and the religious are inseparable, and have equal sanction and value. This interpretation of duties may be illustrated by the mode of our approach to God in prayer, especially in the central function of religious life — the Holy Eucharist. To approach God rightly we must have in at least implicit view the Father as the ultimate goal of worship; the Son as the Mediator through whom we gain access to the Father, and the Spirit as the Operator by whose power and grace we cry Abba, Father. So our Eucharistic Sacrifice is offered to the Father, through and with the Son, and by the Holy Spirit whose transforming operation we invoke upon what we offer.

These considerations ought to make clear the practical bearing of the doctrine of the Trinity upon duty.

§ 10. The most pressing problem in human life is the problem of sin. The mystery of evil which lies behind it, abstractly considered, cannot be solved by human philosophy,[1] and it is useless to trouble our minds with efforts to solve the insoluble. But the problem of escaping from sin is a practical one, which we cannot evade without sacrificing every hope of the world to come. A doctrine, therefore, which enables us to perceive the real meaning of sin, and to discover its remedy, is necessarily a doctrine of overwhelming practical importance.

Such is the value of the doctrine of the Trinity. It shows that a divine society exists of eternal and therefore immutable nature. That society is grounded in holiness, and nothing unholy can be admitted into communion therewith. We were made in order that we might be admitted into divine fellowship — as creatures it is true, but none the less into divine fellowship. The revelation of the Trinity is a revelation of the utter impracticability of an admission of sinners. Thus it brings into bold relief the consequences of sin, as shutting us out of the society for which we were made, and therefore as leaving us to those consequences suggested by St. Augustine's famous saying, "The heart is restless until it find rest in Thee, O God."

[1] Cf. *Being and Attributes of God*, ch. vii. § 5.

Again, the direful nature of the disorder which sin has caused is more vividly understood when it is seen to involve a divine society in its consequences. We may not indeed say that the society of the Trinity is rendered less blessed to its ineffable participants by our sin and exclusion; but, without being able to formulate the mystery with safety, we can perceive that the revelation of the Trinity, and of the purpose of our creation, implies that sin does somehow violate the laws of divine society, and is neither rightly nor adequately understood when regarded as a falling out with only one Person. The evil is more complex, and demands a complicated remedy.

And so, finally, trinitarian doctrine modifies our whole conception of the road to reconciliation. We deal with a divine society, and the dispensations and provisions by which the remedy for sin is afforded are dictated by eternal and unalterable relations of the divine Persons. Our worship we saw to be governed by these relations, and they determine the manner of our reconciliation, with which all of the divine Persons have to do. The Father sends His Son into the world; the Son assumes our nature and suffers in it in our behalf, thus sanctifying Himself as Mediator, one with the Father as touching the Godhead and one with us as touching the Manhood; the Holy Ghost energizes and operates through means of grace whereby we can find "God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."

We all have sinned, and therefore must all find

peace with God in the manner and under the covenant conditions which these truths involve. No proposition is more practical, but its validity cannot be maintained successfully apart from the doctrine of the Trinity.

§ 11. The last particular which we have to consider, in exhibiting the significance of trinitarian doctrine for human life, ought to be at once the most convincing and the most inspiring of all: — its bearing on personal religion or the spiritual life. The fact has to be acknowledged that the interests of what alone is entitled to be called the spiritual life — our interior and personal conversation with God — have suffered greatly among professing Christians in modern days. Many causes have been alleged. Externally speaking they may be summed up as two: sectarian polemics, which have put men out of touch with the deeper principles of Christianity; and the recent and vast enlargement of mundane interests, due to widened scientific knowledge, mechanical inventions, and increased production. So far from lightening life's burdens, these advances have had the immediate result at least of seriously complicating for the million the problem of getting a living. This outcome has naturally caused purely earthly interests to overshadow and displace the spiritual. Countless professing Christians, overwhelmed with the worries of modern competition, are losing ability to perceive that the ultimate and eternal issues of life are really practical. What can

only be described as a pagan utilitarianism determines the values of things for many professing Christians, and a doctrine about the nature of God — mysterious as it necessarily is — cannot be taken seriously or regarded as of practical moment by those whose minds and hearts are wholly absorbed in, and racked by, the difficulty of getting on in this world.

The sympathy which we ought to feel towards those who are thus harassed and diverted from a due consideration of spiritual interests may not blind us to the fact that spiritual interests are the most vital of all, and that the doctrine of the Trinity cannot be disregarded without causing them to suffer. The truth is that we were made for no other end than to become the friends of God, and to enjoy His fellowship in a sacred communion of saints forever. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."[1] A knowledge of God which embraces the knowledge of Jesus Christ in its scope is obviously the knowledge of more than one divine Person, a knowledge which, as we have seen, presupposes the trinitarian conception of God.

And what is this knowledge? Surely eternal life is not to be identified with mere information about God, vitally dependent as it certainly is upon such information, nor with mere belief. Even the description of life which the late Herbert Spencer, the apostle of agnosticism, gave will teach us better.

[1] St. John xvii. 3.

He described life as correspondence with environment.[1] That is, a thing lives only when in touch with its appropriate surroundings. Thus, when our bodies are in gear with their material environment, they appropriate their proper sustenance and live; but when such correspondence begins to fail the body begins to die.

Similar to this is the truth revealed by Christ with reference to the spiritual life. That life is the correspondence of our spirits with their proper environment, which is God. The nature of spirit is such that this correspondence has no reality whatever unless it is conscious correspondence—*i.e.*, conscious touch — with God. If I say that I know a person, I necessarily imply that I know about him, but I mean more; I mean that I have had personal relations with him. We are "personally acquainted," as the phrase goes. Life eternal is then conscious and discerning personal contact with God — the relation graciously conceded to us by God when He promises that we shall be His friends.[2]

We were made for this, and the truism that man is naturally religious means that, apart from sinful corruption, the human soul is "athirst for God"; so that, in the end, no happiness is available that is not grounded in direct divine communion and fellowship. This is why a heaven is in the nature of things impossible for any who do not attain to that charac-

[1] *First Principles*, 6th Ed., p. 70.

[2] Cf. B. F. Westcott, *Epp. of St. John*, pp. 214–218.

ter and those tastes which permit a real and permanent joy in facing God. Service in God's behalf is no doubt a necessary fruit of such character, but it cannot do duty for the cultivation of personal relations with Him.

We all say that love is the chief and sum of Christian virtues. Do we mean the love of man? Yes, but not exclusively, nor even primarily. Love begins in God, and it is our love of God which makes life eternal possible, and constitutes the sole sufficient motive and guide in the love of man. We cannot conceive of a love worth considering which can fulfil itself without taking advantage of all the knowledge of the being who is loved that is available. We cannot conceive of unalloyed bliss derived from contact with a being of whose nature, life, and purposes we are wholly ignorant.

But we cannot sufficiently, or even truly, know about God apart from the doctrine of the Trinity. In view of the relations in which we stand to the divine Persons, and the fundamental laws of approach to God involved in that doctrine, we cannot fulfil the conditions which enable men to find God, and intelligently to enjoy Him, unless our lives are in accord with the requirements of that doctrine.

Let us suppose the opposite. Suppose that we toil on in ignorance of the three divine Persons. Suppose we think to serve a unitarian God, and form our mental habits and spiritual attitude upon a deistic basis. It may be that God will in another and intermediate

state after death mercifully correct and reconstruct our characters. We have no promise that He will, and no assurance that such a reconstruction is possible. But if we come to a trinitarian God with a unitarian preparation, what shall we find? We shall find a strange and unknown God — one with whom we shall still have to become acquainted, and to whom we shall have to adjust ingrained ideas, habits, characters, and tastes before we can find rest and joy in Him. It is here that we are to do these things. It is on earth that we are to begin that fellowship with the true God which will indeed be wondrously enriched hereafter, but which will fulfil rather than subvert our earthly progress in life.

Our God cannot be found, nor can He be truly known when He is found, except as manifesting Himself in an adorable Trinity — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, whom we worship as one God forever. Amen.

By Francis J. Hall, D.D.,
Professor of Dogmatic Theology in the
General Theological Seminary, New York.

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January, 1922

A NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT

ONE of the most thorough and scholarly treatises on theology ever produced within the Anglican part of the Church is now nearing completion. We refer to the ten-volume work on Dogmatic Theology by the Rev. Dr. Francis J. Hall, Professor of Dogmatic Theology in the General Theological Seminary. The ninth volume on The Sacraments has just appeared, and the concluding volume on Eschatology is announced for 1922. We heartily congratulate Dr. Hall on being able to bequeath to posterity as the fruit of his life-work so valuable an heritage.

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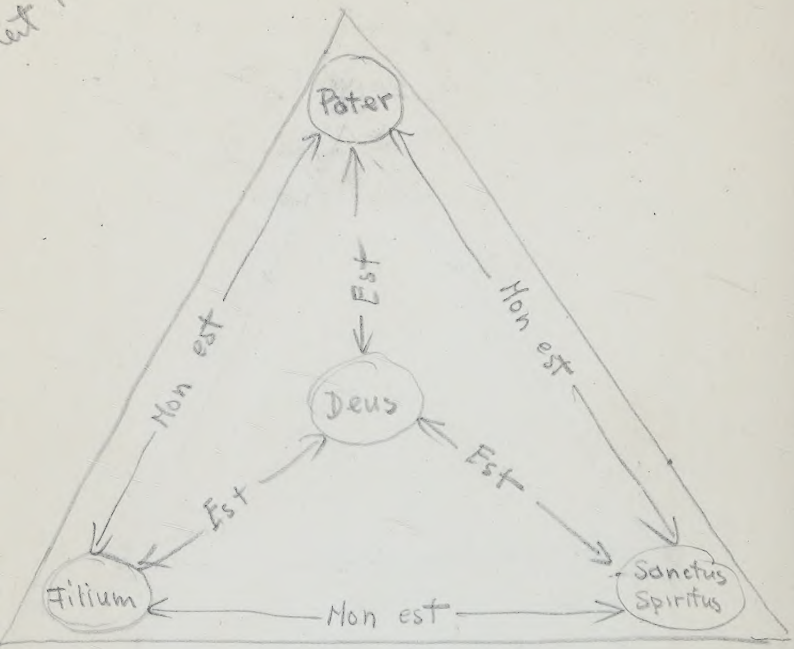

Quidity - whatness
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p 203

A mans opinion is the place
where he gets tired of thinking.
The few thought of truth as
something to be done.

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